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JUNE MEETING, 1903.

THE stated meeting was held on Thursday, the 11th instant, at three o'clock, P. M. ; the President in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved ; and the Librarian and Corresponding Secretary made reports.

Mr. Frederic J. Stimson, of Dedham, was elected a Resident Member.

Voted, That the stated meetings for July, August, and September be omitted, the President and Corresponding Secretary to have power to call a special meeting if necessary.

Rev. Dr. Edward J. Young and Hon. Daniel H. Chamberlain were severally appointed to represent the Society on any appropriate occasion during their projected visits to Europe.

Mr. EDWARD H. GILBERT, who was one of the representatives of the Society at the recent celebration at Greenfield, made a brief extemporaneous report on the subject.

Hon. HENRY S. NOURSE presented a copy of the fac-simile reprint of Mrs. Rowlandson's "Narrative," of which he was the editor, and spoke of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of the town of Lancaster.

The PRESIDENT resumed his examination of some parts of the History of Herodotus, which was begun at the last meeting, and read the following paper : —

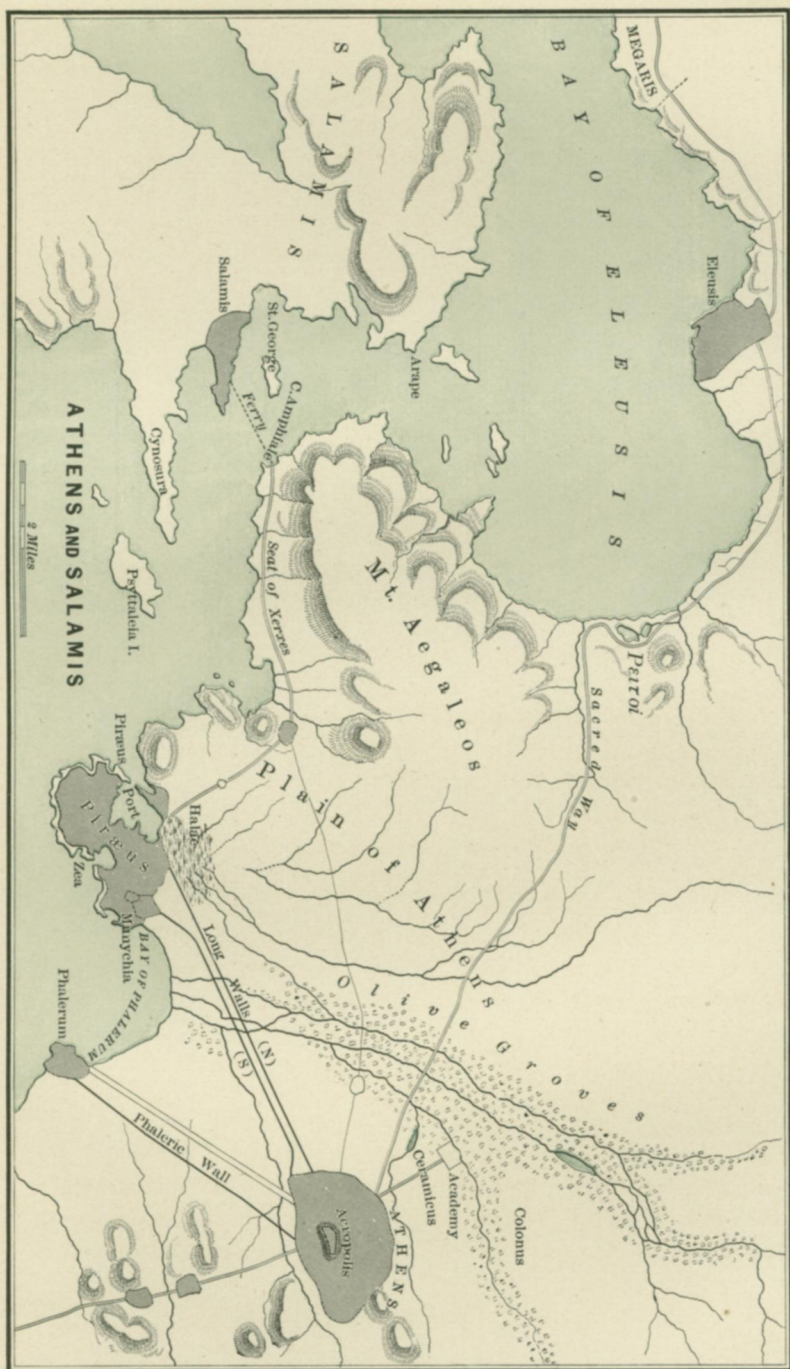
At the last meeting of the Society (May 14) I read some notes prepared during the leisure of the return voyage from my recent visit to Egypt and Greece. Time, and a due regard to the convenience of others having communications to make, did not permit the reading of all I had written. I broke off, therefore, at the point where I had said my say as to the account given by Herodotus of the battle of Marathon. In doing so, I expressed the hope that our associate, Professor

W. W. Goodwin, who has made a special study of Salamis,¹ might again be present at this meeting, ready to contribute to its interest by views, better considered than mine, of that most memorable sea-fight. Professor Goodwin is now here, and I will proceed with what remains of my notes.

I visited Marathon on the 14th of April. The day before I had been to Salamis. I failed to ascend the steep hill still known as "Xerxes' Throne," from the summit of which, as a coign of vantage, I have little doubt the Persian on Salamis day, as Napoleon from Mont St. Jean on that of Waterloo, did actually overlook the scene of combat and of his own overthrow; but I sailed through the bay, studying with deep interest, and some degree of care, its narrow outlets and close bordering shores. As a result, my conclusion was that—however it may have been with Marathon—Salamis was not only a general engagement, but, as such, few in all history, whether on land or water, have been more momentously decisive. Of the account of the battle given by Herodotus, I shall offer some criticism presently; but, before doing so, there are things which then passed through my mind needful to premise.

Salamis would afford an excellent theme for our corresponding associate Captain Mahan. It clearly illustrates, and most potently confirms, his theory of the importance of sea domination,—the story of the Spanish Armada of twenty centuries later not more so. Themistocles in 480 B. C. did for Greece and European civilization what Drake, A. D. 1588, did for England and Protestantism. For, as I read the history of the earlier time, the invasions of Darius and Xerxes, described by Herodotus, were no mere aggressions of a couple of ambitious or warlike chieftains; on the contrary, they were parts of one of those great race movements—Assyrian, Gaul, Goth, Hun and Vandal; Tartar, Mogul or Ottoman—through which some region, impelled by causes hard to explain, empties itself by migration on its neighbors. Herodotus himself describes how the Asiatic movement with which he had historically to deal submerged Africa (B. VII. sects. 1, 7). Another, as I take it not dissimilar movement took place ten centuries later, which, more successful than that

¹ "The Battle of Salamis," by William W. Goodwin: *Papers of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, vol. i. pp. 239-262.



of Darius and Xerxes, was arrested at one end of Europe by Charles Martel, before Tours, in 732, and, in Central Europe, by John Sobieski, at Vienna, as late as 1683. As I read the record in Herodotus, the like racial quickening manifested in the fifth century before Christ for a time threatened the then nascent civilization of Greece and Italy with obliteration. So far as Africa was concerned, this movement met with no serious opposition; it prevailed and became permanent, just as the similar Saracenic movement prevailed and became permanent a thousand years afterwards. But with Africa, the sea-power was not in question; it was a *terra firma* migration. In the case of Greece and Europe, the Hellespont and Dardanelles were geographical facts. Accordingly, the operations of Darius and Xerxes had a maritime base. They depended on a control of the sea. This, by mere dint of superior resources, the Persians, though not a maritime people, for a time held; just as the Spaniards enjoyed a like maritime ascendancy down to the Armada, though they never were at home on the water, as were the Dutch and English. On land, the Asiatic movement of the fifth century before Christ seems to have met no more effective opposition in Europe than in Africa. Marathon, I have referred to. A spirited affair, and a well-aimed as well as effectively delivered strategic blow, it brought to an impotent end that whole immediate Persian plan of campaign; while, more remotely, it gave a check of ten years' duration to the Asiatic race-slide.¹ The battle

¹ Since the last meeting of the Society the issue of the London *Athenæum* for April 4, 1903, has come to hand. In it I notice (p. 433) a criticism of a recent school-book by G. W. Botsford, entitled "An Ancient History for Beginners." The reviewer says of the book: "We are told . . . that the skirmish at Marathon was the most important battle fought hitherto in the history of the world. Indeed, Mr. Botsford's notions of military matters are curious," etc. I have not examined the work referred to, but both statement and criticism afford a timely illustration both of the traditional hold of Herodotus' narrative, and of the destructive trend of modern criticism upon it. From my point of view, Marathon was neither a decisive battle nor was it a skirmish; in the last statement its importance is as much underestimated as it was overestimated in the first. My attention has also been called to the recently published (1901) study by G. P. Grundy, University Lecturer in Classical Geography, at Oxford, entitled "The Great Persian War." The narrative of Herodotus as respects both Marathon and Salamis is here carefully reviewed. My own much more superficial impressions I find in substantial accord with the carefully reasoned conclusions reached by Mr. Grundy. He has evidently made, what I do not pretend to have made, a careful topographical study of the localities, as well as an equally careful examination of the authorities, both classic and modern. But, while Mr.

of Marathon was fought in B.C. 490. In 480 the race-slide recommenced in greater volume, — even bridging the Hellespont. But the bridge across the Hellespont — the essential line of approach of a horde too vast for water carriage — was a question of sea-power. There was the weak link in the chain, — the point of vital difference in the problem of European as contrasted with African development.

Thermopylæ, I gravely suspect, has been an immensely exaggerated affair, — like Marathon, largely Greek boast. I did not visit the famous pass, and am told that the topography of the region has since undergone a change. Herodotus describes the locality, and says that “on the eastern side of the way, is the sea and a morass” (B. VII. sec. 176); and he, further on, tells us that, during the famous combat, many of the Persians, “falling into the sea, perished” (sec. 223). The morass here referred to has since received accretions, until now the narrow path defended by Leonidas looks down upon a plain between it and the water. However this may be, it is obvious that, for purposes of defence against an invading force, the control of the sea was essential to the holding of the pass. It could at any time be turned, and taken in the rear, by an enemy of superior maritime strength. Accordingly, the Greeks had to occupy the neighboring waters. This they did; and the sea-fight at Artemisium ensued, simultaneously with the struggle at Thermopylæ. Not having visited the locality, I have nothing to say of the account of the operations given by Herodotus; but, judging from the map and guide-book, I should infer that Themistocles, through the experience at Artemisium, grasped the key of the subsequent situation at Salamis. It was an exact reversal of those more recent conditions which caused English and Dutch sailors to seek for plenty of sea-room in which to work to windward of the largely preponderant but less expert Spaniards. Though they were much more at home on the water, at Artemisium there was too much sea-room to suit the purposes of the Greeks. The Persians had sufficient space to enable them to take advantage of their superiority in

Grundy has given much theoretical study to military operations, and has many sound views to advance upon them, it is apparent he has never actively participated in those operations, nor himself been dependent on the practical working of a commissariat or quartermaster department. Due consideration is not always given by him to the fact that an army everywhere and always “moves on its belly.”

numbers; and so "many ships of the Grecians perished, and many men" (B. VIII. sec. 16). Practically, it was a Persian victory; for Herodotus tells us that at the close the Greeks had "been severely handled, and especially the Athenians, the half of whose ships were disabled" (sec. 18). The position at Thermopylæ was therefore no longer tenable. It had been turned. That day the land force under Leonidas was destroyed. As a result the Persians found themselves victorious all along the line; the Greeks, panic-stricken. Abandoning all idea of further resistance by land above Corinth, they set to work building a wall across the Isthmus; though, as Herodotus sagely observed, "I am unable to discover what would have been the advantage of the walls built across the Isthmus, if the [Persian] had been master of the sea" (B. VII. sec. 139). Accordingly, beyond Thermopylæ the invading horde met no opposition. By land, after devastating Attica, they took and destroyed Athens; while their vast naval armament, rounding Sunium, co-operated with the land forces. The discomfited Greek fleet had abandoned Phalerum, then the seaport of Athens and the Greek naval depot, and retired to Salamis bay, just opposite, and only three or four miles away. The fate of Europe was thus reduced to a question of sea-power. That issue was to be settled at Salamis.

It was with all this in mind, and Herodotus in hand, that, on the 13th of April, I visited the scene of the famous action. Read on the spot where the events described took place, I found the account of them given by Herodotus not only unsatisfactory and vague, but puzzling. The longer I considered it, the less faith I put in it. The topography of the bay — the shore, the inlets and outlets, and the neighboring heights, — unlike Thermopylæ in this respect — must on the 20th of September, 480 B. C., have been much what I looked upon 2383 years later. Herodotus, who wrote in this case some forty years only after the event, says that the Persians throughout the night preceding the battle were busy perfecting their combinations. A large land force broke camp, marching towards Corinth and the Peninsula; and, at the same time, a portion of the fleet got under weigh to circumnavigate Salamis, and close the western outlet of the bay of Eleusis, co-operating with the movement by land against the Isthmus. Meanwhile the bulk of the Persian fleet had already gathered about Psyt-

taleia. From shore to shore, the straits of Salamis may be some three miles in length by one in width. There were, and are, two outlets towards Athens, — the means of Persian escape in case of disaster, — but both are narrow and somewhat impeded.

According to Herodotus, when the Persians next morning saw the Greeks getting their ships under weigh, they "fell upon them." As the line advanced, "all the other Greeks," Herodotus declares, "began to back water and made for the shore; but Aminias of Pallene, an Athenian, being carried onwards, attacked a ship; and his ship becoming entangled with the other, and the crew not being able to clear, the rest, thereupon coming to the assistance of Aminias, engaged." But he then adds the somewhat contradictory statement that the "Greeks fought in good order, in line; but the [Persians] were neither properly formed, nor did anything with judgment; [consequently] such an event as did happen was likely to occur." Finally, "when the foremost [Persian] ships were put to flight, then the greatest numbers were destroyed; for those who were stationed behind endeavoring to pass on to the front fell foul of their own flying ships. . . . The [Persians] being turned to flight, and sailing away towards Phalerum, the Athenians in the rout ran down both those ships that resisted and those that fled. . . . But the [Persians], whose ships survived, fled and arrived at Phalerum [distance of about three miles] under the protection of the land forces" (B. VIII. sects. 83-86, 89, 91, 92).

Surveying the scene of conflict, I found it very difficult to accept this account of what there took place. Herodotus, it will be observed, says nothing at all of the strategic considerations upon which the Greek movements were based, and he is hardly more communicative as to the tactics of the actual battle. Yet it is not easy to understand what occurred, or how or why it happened, without careful consideration of the reasons, based on locality, which dictated the course of either party, and fixed the place of conflict.

The more I studied the situation, the more deeply impressed I found myself with the military and naval capacity evinced by the Greeks, and their grasp of the situation. The falling back upon Salamis, when further occupation of Attica and Athens became impracticable, was a bold move dictated by

consummate strategic insight, and based on a clear comprehension of the tactics subsequently, and of necessity, involved. First, consider the Persian objective. After occupying Attica, the next move in their campaign necessarily was the invasion of the Peloponnesus. This, with a view to a final crushing of Greek power in its stronghold. The available land force was more than adequate for that operation, — it was overwhelming. But the Peloponnesus was, as it still is, a poor country, and could not, even for a brief period, feed a large invading force. Such a force had, therefore, to be supplied from without. Accordingly, it was necessary it should move along the seashore; a fleet must co-operate with it; upon that fleet it largely depended for existence; and, consequently, the fleet must be in direct, frequent and unbroken communication with its own and the army's base. The remote base of Xerxes' operations was, of course, Asia Minor. But to reach that base from the Peloponnesus involved a dangerous and lengthy voyage beyond stormy Sunium, and across the Ægean sea. A more immediate base was a military necessity; and this base was obviously afforded by Attica and Phalerum. A land force operating in the Peloponnesus had, therefore, to be in close maritime communication with Phalerum. This was vital, — a condition precedent in any plan of campaign.

When, therefore, the Greek fleet retired to Salamis, it retired to a position from which it could at any time emerge, and menace the Persian lines of communication. Not only was the sea route to the Peloponnesus, whether from Attica or Asia Minor, at its mercy, but the coast road to Corinth and the Isthmus, along the shore of the bay of Eleusis, was even more so. The blow could be delivered from Salamis either way — right or left, east or west — with equal destructive force. This being so, it was impossible for the Persians to ignore the danger. If, recognizing it, Xerxes undertook to blockade Salamis, thus preserving his line of water communication, he must, in so doing, have divided his fleet, and so incurred the risk of defeat in detail. But, at the stage of naval development then reached, it is very questionable whether a blockade, in the modern sense of the term, could have been maintained. The vessels on which the work devolved could not hold the sea. Disaster of some sort would have been inevitable. So long, therefore, as the Greek fleet

held Salamis, the Persian was practically checkmated. The destruction of the fleet at Salamis thus became a condition precedent to an advance on the Peloponnesus.

Although Herodotus makes no mention of it, it is impossible Themistocles should not have realized this fact. It involved a mastery of the situation. Moreover, at Salamis, the Greeks could only be destroyed by a frontal attack which, unless the hostile naval operations were most skilfully conducted, gave to the numerically weaker party a distinct advantage. In the straits of Salamis, the lines of battle of two opposing fleets must of necessity be equal; and the presence in those narrow waters of too large a number of vessels would almost inevitably cause confusion and lead to disaster.

Such were the strategic conditions; and such the system of tactics the locality compelled.

The Persians, therefore, had no choice; whether they relished the entertainment or not, before invading the Peloponnesus they had to dispose of the Greek fleet at Salamis. Its presence paralyzed forward movement. So much for the strategic situation. The destruction of the Greek fleet, or at least its dislodgment from a point which jeopardized the Persian communications, being a military necessity, I have already referred to the movements preliminary to the battle described by Herodotus. Fairly intelligible, they occupied the entire night preceding the engagement. The next morning, we are told, Xerxes was at the spur of Mount Ægaleos, whence he proposed to view the impending contest. He had probably passed the night in that vicinity, and was, of course, accompanied by a large portion, if not the great mass, of the Persian army. The whole Attic shore was thus occupied, and the requisite force was stretched along the straits of Salamis, preparatory to crossing over and destroying the Athenians on the opposite island immediately a naval victory was assured. Under these circumstances, it is fair to assume that the Persian fleet, which Herodotus says had been working into position since midnight (sec. 76), occupied, during the small hours of the day of the engagement, the whole eastern end of the straits of Salamis, thus bringing itself into touch with the land forces encamped on the neighboring shore. Apparently, this must have been the situation at dawn.

Allowing for the portion of the fleet detached to circum-

navigate Salamis, and for the losses the Persians had previously sustained in battle, by storm and otherwise, their fleet probably was not less than twice that of the Greeks. The Greek array, we know, consisted of some three hundred and seventy triremes (sec. 48). Allowing only fifty feet to a trireme in the line of battle, — manifestly insufficient, — the straits of Salamis from shore to shore may possibly have afforded space for one hundred and twenty vessels. Herodotus (sec. 85) says that the Phœnicians constituted the Persian wing “towards Eleusis, and westward,” being opposed to the Athenians; who, therefore, were on the left of the Greek line of battle. The Ionians, who made up the Persian wing “towards the east and the Pyræus,” had the Lacedæmonians in their front. The formation was natural; but I found myself utterly unable to make out how the alignment could have been from west to east. Undoubtedly, the Greeks formed so as to cover the town of Salamis, — their temporary naval depot, — and the entrance to the bay of Eleusis. This was a necessity. The Persian formation, after entering the straits of Salamis, could have been only from north to south. The two lines would then have confronted each other, the Greeks looking almost due east, the Persians due west. If the limits of the straits admitted of but one hundred and twenty triremes at the outside in line, the Greek ships must have been at least three deep, while the Persian force, if arrayed in full, could not have been less than six deep. But, for the bulk of the latter array, there was not room in the straits; it must have remained outside, about and beyond Psyttaleia. The Athenian contingent constituted more than one-half — perhaps two-thirds — of the entire Greek fleet. Their vessels also, as Herodotus tells us, were by far the best (sec. 42) and the most skilfully manned. Of them Themistocles was in command. Eurybiades, the Lacedæmonian, was, however, the admiral of the combined fleet. He had commanded at Artemisium also. The Lacedæmonian contingent accordingly held the right of the line, constituting the nominal van; while the left was assigned to the Athenians. But at Salamis the left of the line was in reality its van, and for an obvious reason; — it covered the entrance to the bay of Eleusis, the Greek line of communication and retreat. That had to be held at any cost, for, if lost, the Greeks would have been

thrown back on Cynosura and Salamis, and utterly destroyed. No escape would have been possible. The Greek line of battle, therefore, must have run north and south in front of Salamis, from some point on Cynosura to Cape Amphiale, closing the passage into the bay of Eleusis. As no flanking movement was possible, the Greek line had to be broken, if broken at all, by a direct onslaught. The strategic and tactical conditions are apparent, and control. But Herodotus then goes on distinctly to intimate that, up to the moment when actual fighting began, no matured plan of tactics existed in the minds of the Greek commanders. He simply tells us (sec. 83) that, after listening to a speech from Themistocles, the Greeks went on board their triremes. As they were doing so, a vessel sent the evening before on a pious errand to Ægina returned, presumably through the bay of Eleusis, showing that the western outlet was still open. "Thereupon the Greeks got all their ships under weigh." The Persian formation had already been effected. The order of battle is thus plain, though Herodotus fails to make it so. The two fleets, in deep formation, with a north and south alignment, filled the length of the straits, the Greek line of retreat being to the bay of Eleusis, and that of the Persians by Psyttaleia to Phalerum. Apparently, the two formations were completed almost simultaneously; for when the Greeks got under weigh, the Persians immediately fell upon them (sec. 84). At this point Herodotus has recourse to the supernatural, and consequently his narrative becomes unintelligible. He tells us that, as the two arrays approached each other, the Greek line wavered, and the point of final impact was matter of chance, an Athenian trireme "being carried onwards," whatever that may mean. Now this is not the way in which disciplined and well-commanded fleets fight, nor are victories so won. The Greek fleet at Salamis was indisputably well commanded, and it was fresh from Artemisium. Veterans in fight, the Greeks were, as seamen, not less superior to those opposed to them — Persians, Phœnicians, or Egyptians — than, three hundred years ago, the sailors of Elizabeth were to those of Philip. Their triremes, also, were unquestionably in every respect more formidable than those of the Persians, — better built, better equipped, more skilfully handled.

Themistocles, moreover, had, it is evident, the situation per-

fectly in hand. The contingent of the combined fleet under his immediate and personal direction held the position in the line upon which the brunt of battle must fall, — that opposite the Persian right and covering the Greek line of retreat. The place of conflict was his own selection ; and he led his followers in the full light of the experience of Artemisium. As already pointed out, in those confined limits vast superiority in numbers was, to inexperienced navigators, absolute weakness, and a source of danger. For any considerable force of triremes to manœuvre within the breadth of Salamis bay was impossible ; to avoid inextricable confusion, even in the absence of the panic incident to disaster in battle, was very difficult. All this the Athenian commander fully realized, and, in view of it, he had forced on the engagement against the wish and judgment of panic-stricken allies. With great skill he apparently now waited until he saw his advancing opponents inextricably involved in the narrow waters of the straits. They could not develop their front ; they could not manœuvre ; and as they advanced, they must become more and more crowded. To withdraw was impossible ; to go forward against a determined and well-directed enemy meant destruction. This must have become apparent to the Persian commanders ; and, at the moment when it thus became apparent, Themistocles pounced upon them.

Viewing the locality, my own surmise is that the rearward movement referred to by Herodotus was designed. The Athenians, constituting the left wing of the Grecian array, under the eye of Themistocles, dashed vigorously forward, the right holding back. Of “ Aminias of Pallene, an Athenian,” the name only has been handed down by Herodotus ; but, if I might venture a surmise, — perhaps, in such a connection, guess would be the more appropriate word, — it would be that, for reasons best known to Themistocles, Aminias was that day selected to break the enemy’s line. It may be that at Artemisium he had distinguished himself for daring and energy, it may be that his trireme was recognized by common consent as the heaviest, the best disciplined, and the most skilfully handled of the entire fleet, it may be that in council his voice had been loudest and most emphatic for aggressive action, — but, whether one or all of these considerations, or yet some other, led thereto, my guess is that

his ship was picked out that day in advance to serve as the thin edge of the entering wedge. If such was the case, the left wing of the Greek fleet, swiftly advancing with Aminias slightly in the lead, by an impact, as violent as it was sharp and concentrated, broke the opposing line, rolling up the Persian centre and right in inextricable confusion in front of the triremes of the Greek right wing, who, then coming into action, completed the discomfiture of the Persian array. That discomfiture was moreover greatly aggravated by a constant stream of vessels moving forward from what should have been a well-ordered reserve in the open waters about and beyond Psyttaleia. These vessels crowding into the narrow straits of Salamis, already blocked with combatants and fugitives, naturally confounded confusion.

If, therefore, Themistocles' plan of battle was indeed such as I have surmised, it was a brilliant plan, and one vigorously executed. It was also at once productive of the results naturally to be looked for under the conditions of locality. I find those results best described in a passage from Æschylus, quoted in my guide-book. Referring to the condition in which the Persians found themselves as the result of the Athenians' wedge-like assault, Æschylus, himself a combatant, says —

“their multitude

Became their ruin ; in the narrow frith
They might not use their strength, and, jammed together,
Their ships with brazen beaks did bite each other,
And shattered their own oars. Meanwhile the Greeks
Stroke after stroke dealt dexterous all around.”

But my objections to the account given by Herodotus do not stop here. I next come across what I cannot but deem a pure bit of Greek dramatic effect. Herodotus describes (sec. 76) how, the night before the engagement, the Persians landed “a considerable number” of men on the little island of Psyttaleia, lying mid way in the channel between Salamis and the mainland, “as they expected most part of the men and wrecks would be driven thither,” with a view to saving those of the Persian armament there forced ashore, or destroying those of the Greek. That such a detachment was, in the ordinary course of military operations, then landed, seems altogether probable. The night before the battle, some portion of the Persian fleet was probably drawn up, or beached, on the shores of Psyttaleia.

If that island was thus to a certain extent used as a convenient naval base, it would naturally have had some military force on it, if only men at arms from the triremes. But, though Herodotus is silent on the subject, this detachment was subsequently represented by Æschylus as constituting

“The bloom of all the Persian youth, in spirit
The bravest, and in birth the noblest princes.”

Withdrawal was, by the issue of the engagement, made impossible; and Aristides, taking in the situation, collected a number of heavy armed men left at Salamis, and, landing on Psyttaleia, put all the Persians there to the sword, under the very eyes of Xerxes, impotent to aid. The monarch is even represented as rending his garments in his anguish at seeing the flower of Persia's youth thus slaughtered in his sight.

It is all very dramatic, this story of the Persian princes, — isolated and helpless; but I venture gravely to question it. In the first place Psyttaleia had no apparent strategic importance in the impending naval contest. Had the Persians been victorious, as Xerxes fully expected they would be, the Greeks would have been thrown back on Salamis and the bay of Eleusis, and could have come nowhere near Psyttaleia; if, on the contrary, the Persians met with disaster, it was obvious that Psyttaleia would be as much cut off from support as Salamis itself. In the next place, it is to the last degree improbable that a body of chosen youth should have been selected for such a service, one of no apparent moment, immaterial in case of success and hopeless in case of disaster. Finally, had they been so selected and stationed, it is hardly reasonable to suppose that they would have suffered themselves to be knocked on the heads, like sheep, by a small detachment coming over from Salamis immediately after the sea-fight was decided. My interpretation of the famous incident is that it was, in the main, another case of the general killing of the defeated in battle, rather than a regular feature of warfare. After the overthrow of the Persian fleet many triremes were run down, or forced on Psyttaleia, in the panic flight for Phalerum. The survivors, half drowned and powerless further to resist, struggled on shore, and in due time were there put to death by the Athenians, in the way described. The rest was Greek imagination. The victims were transmuted; — mere unarmed,

half-dead, and wholly drenched refugees from a rout, they became in history the flower of Persia's gilded youth.

If, however, Marathon was the Bunker Hill of the Greek resistance to Asia, Salamis was assuredly its Yorktown. As I have said, ten years intervened between the two (August 12, 490—September 20, 480 B. C.). While the first called only a halt to the advancing Asiatic horde, during which Persian as well as Greek studied a suggestive experience, the second was a decisive blow aimed at a vital point. For, as a result of Salamis, sea domination passed definitely into the hands of the Greeks. Thenceforth the Persian line of communication lay at the mercy of their opponents; and so the Asiatic movement was turned back. The way was thus left clear not only for Grecian development, but for the Roman Empire; and not until the fall of Constantinople, more than nineteen centuries later, was the work of that most memorable day undone. At last, in 1453, the Asiatic secured a firm foothold beyond the Bosphorus; with what results we all know. Not yet has he been displaced. But, at the later day as at the earlier, the issue was one of sea-power. Neither Venice nor the Byzantine Empire was equal to the production of a Themistocles or a Drake.

Meanwhile, so far as Herodotus is concerned, my contention is that two of the weaknesses to which historians of all times and tongues have been, and still are, most prone, are markedly apparent in his account of Marathon and Salamis. In the case of the first, patriotism, and the wish to tickle a national vanity, led him into a direct misstatement of facts; while, in telling of what took place at Salamis, he is, to say the least, unsatisfactory and obscure,—a land layman, he undertook to describe a naval operation. It is somewhat depressing to be compelled to admit that the bad example in these respects thus in the beginning set by the Father of History has been followed with conspicuous fidelity by his descendants even to the day that now is. Where the record of military and naval operations is not falsified in a spirit of patriotism, it is almost invariably vitiated by a failure to grasp practical conditions essential to a correct understanding of the why and the wherefore of what took place. Not only must local topography be studied and understood, but the fact must constantly be borne in mind that men on the march and in battle, whether by land or sea,

are not mere animated machines. They have to be fed ; they do get tired and demoralized ; they are subject to disease and alarm ; and, as Wellington once said, a leader is never quite sure as to what may be taking place on the other side of the hill.

Mr. GOODWIN, having been called on, spoke in substance as follows : —

The President's remarks have brought out with great distinctness the importance of the battle of Salamis as one of the decisive sea-fights of history. This decisive character has become more and more evident during the last few years. It is now plain that the movement of Xerxes against Greece in 480 B. C. was part of a grander scheme for extending the power of the Persian Empire by the subjugation not merely of Greece proper, but also of the Greater Greece, which included the powerful Greek cities of Sicily and of South Italy. This view was never properly emphasized until Freeman, in his History of Sicily (vol. ii.), wrote his graphic account of the Carthaginian campaign in Sicily in 480 B. C., with its disastrous end, the battle of Himera, which, according to a common belief of the Greeks, was fought on the same day with the battle of Salamis. Vague suspicions of this great plan had occurred to Grote and other historians ; but its extent and importance were not seriously considered by them. Besides the coincidence in time of the invasion of Greece and Sicily, we have a distinct statement of Ephorus (fragment iii.) that, when Xerxes was preparing to attack Greece, envoys came to Gelon of Syracuse imploring him to join the Greek alliance, while others came from the Persians and Phœnicians to the Carthaginians, urging them to send a large armament to Sicily which should subjugate all the Greeks and their friends (*i. e.*, in both Sicily and Italy), and then sail over to Peloponnesus. There, of course, they were to meet the army and fleet of Xerxes, which would then have completed the conquest of Greece.¹ Our accounts of the Carthaginian invasion of Sicily, and especially of the decisive

¹ This at once recalls the stupendous plan of the Sicilian Expedition which Alcibiades ascribed to Athens in his speech at Sparta (Thucyd. vi. 90). Athens was first to subdue the Greeks in Sicily and Italy, then to try to secure Carthage, and finally with this united force to attack Peloponnesus.

battle of Himera, are greatly exaggerated, especially the story of the slaughter of one hundred and fifty thousand Carthaginians at Himera; but the later accounts of the hordes of Carthaginian prisoners in Sicily who worked on the great temples of Agrigentum, and the terrible vengeance of Carthage upon Sicily seventy years later, with the general traditions of the Sicilian Greeks, show that Salamis and Himera worked powerfully together in behalf of civilization by stopping the advance of Persia westward, and checking the power and ambition of Carthage until Rome could cope with her. There are, moreover, the strongest reasons for thinking that the trilogy with which Æschylus gained the first prize at Athens in 472 B. C., consisting of the Phineus, the Persians, and the Glaucus, had for its three connected subjects the Argonautic Expedition, Salamis, and Himera.

In a paper on Salamis, written during my residence in Athens in 1882-1883,¹ my chief object was to show that the common account of the battle, supposed to be founded on Herodotus, according to which the greater part of the Persian fleet was brought into the straits of Salamis during the night before the battle, and drawn up in three lines along the Attic shore before daybreak,² is entirely wrong, and that the Persian fleet did not enter the straits until just before the battle began in the morning. I also maintained that Herodotus did not intend to give this view of the Persian movements. I am most happy to be confirmed in my opinion, which was at first deemed most heretical, by our President, who read Herodotus at Salamis and yet appears not to have thought of interpreting his account in the common way. From Herodotus alone, with a few lines of Æschylus, and his own military experience, he has, in my opinion, given a clearer view of the whole battle than is to be found in Grote or in most later historians.

The Persian movements by which the Greeks were surrounded in the bay of Salamis during the night, so that retreat was cut off, whatever they were, were executed so secretly and silently that the Greeks never suspected that they were going on until Aristides arrived from Ægina late in the

¹ Papers of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, vol. i. pp. 239-262.

² See, for example, Grote's plan of the battle, vol. v. p. 174, with his account of the Persian movements.

night and reported the truth to Themistocles. Even Themistocles himself, who had craftily advised Xerxes to do this very thing, had no previous knowledge of any of the Persian movements. Aristides had with great difficulty escaped capture on his passage; and he reported, "The sea about us and behind us is full of the enemy's ships." Now the distance from the Attic shore to the two points of Salamis, which the Persian fleet by the common view must have passed, is hardly forty-five hundred feet. Is it possible to conceive of such carelessness on the part of the Greeks, at this momentous crisis, that hundreds of Persian ships could have passed directly by their camp at Salamis, and within hearing distance of the town, without attracting their notice? And there are strong reasons for believing that the night before the battle followed shortly the September full moon. Plutarch (Camill. 19) gives "about the twentieth of Boëdromion" (September) as the date of the battle, and an eclipse of the moon is reported for the eighteenth. This was the Harvest Moon, which, seven days after it is full, rises at about ten P.M.; and after midnight, when Herodotus places the Persian movements, the straits of Salamis must have been brilliantly illumined by the moon, so that the supposed secret entrance of the Persian ships would have been impossible.

Again, can we believe that the Greek fleet was allowed to form quietly in line of battle in the little harbor of Salamis in the face of a Persian fleet of at least twice its size only a few hundred yards distant on the opposite shore? Themistocles harangued the Greek crews on the shore of Salamis after day-break, when by the common theory the enemy's fleet must have been in full sight across the bay. Would he have allowed the empty ships to lie unprotected on the shore if he had seen three lines of Persians opposite ready to fall upon them? And would the Persians, who were eager to capture the Greek fleet, which they believed was intending to elude them by flight, have lost the opportunity to anticipate the Spartan tactics of *Ægospotami* by seizing the empty ships, or at least to attack the Greeks before their line of battle could be formed?

We have fortunately one unimpeachable eyewitness of the battle and an actual combatant in *Æschylus*, who was an intimate friend of many of those who directed the contest. Though we cannot always accept a poet's account of a battle

as historic in every particular, we may here at least safely maintain that nothing can be accepted as historic which distinctly contradicts any plain statement of Æschylus as regards the chief features of the contest. Less than eight years after the battle he wrote "The Persians," the scene of which is at the court of Susa, where a messenger brings the news of Salamis to Atossa, mother of Xerxes. I give an abstract of this passage without embellishment, thinking that this is the only sure foundation of our knowledge of the general plan of the battle. Making allowance for poetic language, nothing here can be opposed to the views of the men who fought at Salamis, and other testimony must be explained to agree with this or be rejected.¹

The messenger's account begins with the crafty message of Themistocles to Xerxes that the Greeks are about to escape from the bay of Salamis in the coming night. The king at once orders two movements, to shut the Greeks within the bay and to make escape impossible. When night shall come, the commanders are first "to station a squadron of ships in three lines, to guard the exits and the rushing straits of the sea" (*i. e.*, the southern outlets of the straits of Salamis), and, secondly, to station "others around about the isle of Ajax" (Salamis). He threatens that if the Greeks break this blockade and take to flight, all the commanders shall lose their heads. When night comes on, the two movements proceed, and the Persians are kept sailing about all night, taking their various positions and eagerly watching for the expected flight of the Greeks. The poet, addressing an audience composed largely of those who had fought in the battle or had witnessed it, makes no allusion to the ignominious plan for escape of the previous day, which Themistocles had frustrated by his message to Xerxes. He next describes the disappointment of the Persians as the night advanced and no signs of flight appeared, and their consternation when at daybreak they heard the solemn pæan of the Greeks loudly echoing from the rocky hills of Salamis. "For it was not with thoughts of flight that the Greeks were then chanting their solemn pæan, but as men rushing into battle with the courage of brave hearts. The trumpet with its voice inflamed all their host. And at once, with the united stroke of the dashing oar, they smote the

¹ See "Persians," vss. 353-432.

briny deep at the word of command. And in a moment they all burst upon our sight. The right wing first advanced in good order, and next the whole fleet was in motion, while from all the ships a loud cry was heard: 'Children of Greeks, advance; free your country; free your children, your wives, the shrines of your fathers' Gods and the tombs of your sires. Now ye are to fight for them all.' . . . And now ship dashed against ship its brazen-pointed beak." The conflict began by a Greek ship (elsewhere said to be that of Aminias, brother of Æschylus) attacking a Phœnician vessel and breaking her stern, which was the signal for a general engagement. "At first the *stream* (ῥεύμα) of the Persian fleet held out (ἀντεῖχεν); but when a mass of ships was crowded in the narrows (ἐν στενῷ), so that they could give no help to one another, and they dashed into their own vessels with their brazen-mouthed beaks, soon their banks of oars were everywhere crashed. And then the Greeks skilfully dashed in upon them from every side; the hulls of their ships lay upturned, and the water was no longer to be seen, filled with wrecks and slaughtered mortals, while the shores were covered with the dead. All the ships which survived of the barbaric¹ host escaped as they could in disorderly flight. The Greeks in the mean time speared the Persians in the sea with broken oars and fragments of the wrecks, as men spear tunnies or a draft of fish. Their cries filled the whole sea with wailings, until night ended the slaughter. I could not tell you the full story of the horrors, even if I were to spend ten days in recounting them. But be assured, never in a single day did such a mighty multitude of men perish."

Is it conceivable that this account was written by an eyewitness, who knew that the Persian fleet which the Greeks attacked was lying quietly along the Attic coast opposite the bay of Salamis hours before the battle began, having passed the dangerous straits during the night? The passage about the "stream" of Persian ships at first keeping its order, and then falling into confusion from being crowded in passing the narrow strait, is itself enough to decide the question. Diodorus gives essentially the same account of the opening of the battle, evidently following Æschylus, but perhaps adding

¹ Æschylus makes the Persian messenger, addressing the Queen mother, call the Persians *barbarians*.

some items from other sources. He says (xi. 18): "The Persians at first sailed on, keeping their line, having plenty of room; but when they *came into the narrows*, they were forced to withdraw some ships from their line, and this caused great confusion. The Admiral led the line, and was the first to join battle; but he fell after a brilliant struggle. When his ship was sunk, the whole fleet of the barbarians fell into disorder." Thucydides and Plutarch give Themistocles the credit of forcing the Persians to fight in the straits. Thucydides (i. 74) makes Themistocles *chiefly responsible for fighting in the narrows*, while Plutarch speaks of his great sagacity in beginning the battle just when the morning sea-breeze drove a swell into the narrows. This lively swell, which is familiar to every one who has sailed from Piræus to Salamis in the forenoon, would cause no trouble to a fleet already inside of the long point of Salamis, but would greatly annoy ships entering the straits in regular order ready for battle.

If we now examine the passages of Herodotus which describe the battle and the movements which preceded it, we find them often confused and unsatisfactory, sometimes admitting more than one explanation; but there is nothing, in my opinion, which cannot by a fair interpretation be explained so as to agree with the chief points in the remarkably clear and simple account of Æschylus. Herodotus (viii. 67-69) tells of the Persian council of war at Phalerum, in which it was resolved to attack the Greek fleet at Salamis. With this plan in view, Xerxes brought up his ships to (or towards) Salamis, the day before the battle, and arranged them quietly in order: ἀνήγον τὰς νέας εἰς Σαλαμίνα καὶ παρεκρίθησαν διαταχθέντες κατ' ἡσυχίην (viii. 70). I have always thought that the fleet was then lying south of the long point of Salamis (Cynosura) and perhaps Psyttaleia, though this is uncertain. Later in the same day Xerxes received the message of Themistocles. He fell at once into the trap, and changed his whole plan. He was now bent on capturing and destroying the Greek fleet when it attempted to sail away from Salamis during the night. He therefore blocked the only two passages by which the Greeks could try to escape, that on the north by the bay of Eleusis, and that on the south by the straits between Cynosura and the Attic shore. Herodotus describes these two movements as follows (viii. 76). After midnight the Persians "brought

their west wing up to Salamis so as to encircle it" (or "by a circuitous movement"), ἀνήγον μὲν τὸ ἀπ' ἐσπέρης κέρας κυκλούμενοι πρὸς τὴν Σαλαμίνα. This refers to what Æschylus calls stationing "other ships round about the isle of Ajax," and Diodorus describes as sending Egyptian ships with orders to block the passage between Salamis and the coast of Megara. The meaning must be that the west wing of the fleet (as it lay before nightfall) was sent to blockade the west side of Salamis, and especially to guard the narrow passage between the island and Megara. These are the ships which Aristides encountered in his night passage. Secondly, Herodotus continues, "those stationed about Ceos and Cynosura sailed up, and held the whole passage with their ships as far as Munychia," ἀνήγον δὲ οἱ ἀμφὶ τὴν Κέον τε καὶ τὴν Κυνόσουραν τεταγμένοι, κατέχον τε μέχρι Μουνιχίης πάντα τὸν πορθμὸν τῆσι νηυσί.¹ This language, obscure in itself, when explained by the corresponding account in Æschylus, "to guard the exits and the rushing straits of the sea," must refer to bringing the remainder of the Persian fleet from its first position south of Salamis (after the west wing had been sent to the west and north) up to the entrance of the straits of Salamis, to cut off the retreat of the Greeks in that direction. The immense fleet might easily extend from this position to near the entrance of the harbor of Piræus, behind which the high hill of Munychia is a most conspicuous landmark.

In viii. 85 Herodotus states the positions of the two fleets at the opening of the battle. "Opposite the Athenians," he says, "were posted the Phœnicians, who held the west wing towards Eleusis; and opposite the Lacedæmonians were the Ionians, who held the east wing towards Piræus." This must represent the order in which Xerxes intended to fight; but no such extended Persian line was ever formed. Indeed, Herodotus himself says just afterwards: "While the Greeks fought in good order in line of battle, the barbarians were no longer in line and did nothing with any sense." The former statement must refer to the order in which the Persians were arranged before they began to pass the straits, but this was

¹ Κυνόσουρα, *dog's tail*, is a general name for any long point of land, and here must refer to the long eastern point of Salamis. Κέος, certainly not the well-known island Κέως, is probably some other place on Salamis, not elsewhere mentioned.

broken up when the crowding and confusion began. Probably they intended to enter the bay in a column (a *stream*, *ῥεύμα*), which would be changed to a line of battle afterwards by facing about to the left. The column as it passed the straits was sailing about W. N. W., which justifies Herodotus in calling the front of the column "the west wing towards Eleusis." He is often more inexact as to direction, as when he makes the pass of Thermopylæ run north and south and the Hellespont flow westward into the Ægean.

The passages of Herodotus which I have discussed are those which are supposed to be the authority for the movement of the Persian fleet into the bay of Salamis during the night. The remainder of his account of the battle adds little to that of Æschylus, and is nowhere opposed to it. He describes the slight panic of the Greeks when they first saw the Persians advancing into the bay: Æschylus naturally does not mention this, but merely says that the right wing advanced before the left. The question which side made the first attack is answered alike by both: the Athenian Aminias has the credit of opening the battle. Herodotus agrees with Æschylus as to the utter rout of the Persians, which began with the confusion caused by the crowd of ships in the straits. The Persians probably decided to attack the Greeks in the bay of Salamis or wherever they might meet them, when they were satisfied in the morning that there would be no attempt to escape by flight. Their first movements would of course be known to Themistocles, who at once prepared to meet the enemy before he could pass the straits and form his line of battle inside of the bay. The two fleets met soon after the front of the Persian column had passed the straits in good order; but the Greeks soon saw the confusion which followed, and devoted themselves to attacking the disabled ships in the straits. The result is told in the graphic words of Æschylus.

I have not yet alluded to the occupation of the little island of Psyttaleia by Persians, the account of which seems incredible to Mr. Adams. This is made a most important part of the story of the Persian messenger by Æschylus, and it is confirmed by Herodotus, who makes Aristides the commander of the Greek force which slaughtered the helpless Persians. Æschylus could hardly have invented the story of which his friend Aristides was the hero, though he may have allowed

the Persian messenger to exaggerate the nobility and dignity of the sufferers. Still I admit that posting the Persians on the island would have been an absurd act if done with a view to the battle which was actually fought. But it was done before Xerxes had any idea of such a battle. He had been deceived by Themistocles, and thought of nothing but cutting off the expected retreat of the Greeks by night. Their only natural way of escape was through the straits of Salamis, after passing which they must pass close to Psyttaleia, probably choosing the narrow western passage between the island and Cynosura, to elude the main body of Persians in the wider passage to the east. Herodotus (viii. 76) says the island lay directly in the line of the *expected battle* (τῆς ναυμαχίας τῆς μελλούσης), *i. e.*, the fight with the retreating Greeks; and in this view it was a wise act to occupy the island with Persians, who would slaughter Greeks and rescue Persians who might be driven ashore from disabled ships. As it turned out, the men on the island were entirely out of the battle, and were at the mercy of the Greeks afterwards.

On a recent visit to Athens I had the pleasure of meeting Lieutenant Pericles Rhediades of the Royal Greek Navy, who presented me with his interesting and instructive article on the "Battle of Salamis, from a Naval and Historic Point of View" (ἡ ἐν Σαλαμῖνι ναυμαχία ἀπὸ ναυτικῆς καὶ ἱστορικῆς ἀπόψεως), 1902, in which he reviews the authorities on the battle, and adds many observations from his own studies made at the Greek naval station in the straits of Salamis. He agrees with me in thinking that no Persian ships passed the straits until just before the battle, and his general idea of the battle is the same as mine. But he has convinced me that I was wrong in placing the Heracleum on Ægaleos, though I think the real position of this sanctuary is still very uncertain. I can, however, no longer even attempt to fix the exact position of the Greek line of battle, as I did in my Athens paper, following the statement of Diodorus that it ran from Salamis to the Heracleum. Our evidence, it seems to me, shows only that the two fleets met just inside of the straits of Salamis, before any real Persian line was formed within the straits; and after this, in the confusion and panic of the Persians, the whole question of lines of battle becomes unimportant.

Mr. CHARLES C. SMITH spoke in substance as follows:—

Not long before the President went abroad last winter he placed in my hands a large parcel of copies of private letters from Benjamin Vaughan to Lord Shelburne, written in 1782, 1783, during the negotiations for peace between the mother country and the American colonies. An examination of these copies showed that they were in the handwriting of the eldest daughter of the late Hon. Charles Francis Adams, and that they were made for him about 1850, while he was engaged in the preparation of his edition of *The Works of John Adams*. In a note in the eighth volume of that collection, the editor states that it was originally his intention to print this part of Vaughan's correspondence in the appendix to that volume; but the mass of his materials was so great that he had been obliged to relinquish this purpose. Subsequently my attention was called to a still larger parcel, marked "Letters and papers of Benjamin Vaughan, communicated to J. Q. Adams, 1828-1830." In it were numerous letters from Mr. Vaughan to President Adams, the earliest, dated Hallowell, August 24, 1828. This letter appears to have been written in accordance with a promise "to one of your diplomatic agents," probably the Hon. William P. Preble, "to communicate to you some materials respecting the northeastern boundary of the United States," which was at that time engaging the anxious attention of our government. A fortnight later in answer to a letter from Mr. Adams, acknowledging the receipt of the papers already sent, and expressing a wish for further communications, Mr. Vaughan wrote, under date of September 10, 1828, "As to *ulterior* papers, I shall with pleasure furnish a number. 1°. My letters to Lord Lansdown shall be submitted to you without reserve, so far as they regard the communications made to him on the subject of the negotiations of 1782, 1783." In accordance with this promise he sent to Mr. Adams before the end of 1828 copies of the copies or original draughts of the letters written by him from Paris to Lord Shelburne. These copies were made by Mr. Vaughan himself or by several members of his family. In making them he added some explanatory notes, and he seems to have omitted in a few instances portions of the letter which was actually sent to Lord Shelburne. The copies were in three parcels stitched in covers of

gray wrapping-paper, and were not arranged chronologically, but were probably copied in the order in which the first copies were brought to light, some of them having been thought at first to be lost.

Benjamin Vaughan was the eldest son of Samuel and Sarah (Hallowell) Vaughan, and was born in the island of Jamaica, April 19, 1751. He received a good education at non-conformist schools in England and at the University of Cambridge, but, on account of his religious principles, was not allowed to graduate. Not long after leaving the University he became private secretary to Lord Shelburne, and also studied law and medicine. At the age of thirty he married Sarah Manning, daughter of an English merchant and aunt of the late Cardinal Manning, and at about the same time he engaged in business. After the death of the Marquis of Rockingham in the summer of 1782, and the formation of the Shelburne ministry, he was sent by the new prime minister to Paris as a personal and confidential agent to sound the American Commissioners, and to keep his patron informed of the course of affairs. He had numerous interviews with Franklin and Adams, and labored assiduously with Lord Shelburne to secure from the British ministry such terms as would insure a durable peace. In 1792, he was elected a member of the House of Commons for the borough of Calne, where the Lansdowne interest has always been very great. Two years later, in consequence of embarrassing disclosures in regard to his relations with the French and Irish Revolutionists, he left the country and went to France and afterward to Switzerland. In 1796 he came to America and established his residence at Hallowell, in Maine. "Here," says his friend and relative, Robert H. Gardiner, "he occupied himself in study, in an extensive correspondence with distinguished persons on both sides of the Atlantic, and in promoting the welfare of the place and of the people among whom he had fixed his residence." He became strongly conservative in his political opinions, but took little or no part in public affairs. In 1807 Harvard College conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws; and in 1812 he received the same degree from Bowdoin College. He died December 8, 1835. Before his death he expressed a wish that no memoir of him should be written; but fairly good accounts of his life and character may be found in the sketch by Robert H. Gardiner

in the sixth volume of the Collections of the Maine Historical Society; in the Genealogy and Reminiscences of the Vaughan Family, by John H. Sheppard, in the nineteenth volume of the New England Historical and Genealogical Register; and in the article by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice in the Dictionary of National Biography. A single extract from Mr. Gardiner's sketch will not be without interest to members of this Society, in view of a recent controversy in this community. "Dr. Vaughan," he says, "though not subscribing to the doctrine of the Trinity, was a serious Christian. He was a regular attendant at the Congregational meeting in Hallowell, contributed very generously to its support, was indefatigable in his kindness and liberality to its pastor and his family; but was not allowed to join with the society in commemorating the dying love of a common Redeemer. On communion Sundays he came to Gardiner to receive the sacrament of the Episcopal Church."

It is well known that there was as little harmony among the British negotiators and agents at Paris as there was among the American Commissioners. An amusing instance of this is afforded in Vaughan's correspondence and in Oswald's. In a letter to Lord Shelburne dated December 4, 1782, the former writes of Henry Strachey in very derogatory terms;¹ and little more than a month later Oswald writes to Lord Shelburne about Vaughan in an equally uncomplimentary way. "I know a gentleman," he writes, under date of January 8, 1783, "and he is not entirely unknown to your Lordship, of that happy vein, that if he is not employed, will officiously thrust himself into employment; and if he is not invited into the boat will step in at once, without waiting for an invitation."² There was a great deal of working at cross purposes, both in the negotiations for a separate peace with America and in those for a general pacification.

I desire to communicate now nine of the letters to Lord Shelburne, as supplementing in a rather curious and interesting way the Price letters communicated by Mr. Norton at our last meeting. The other letters from Mr. Vaughan, which it is not proposed to print at the present time, deal less directly with purely American questions, but all urge the importance

¹ See *post*, p. 423.

² Fitzmaurice's *Life of Lord Shelburne*, vol. iii. p. 321.

of making concessions in order to prevent a renewal of hostilities. With this view Mr. Vaughan strongly advocated the giving up of Gibraltar to gratify Spain and the acquisition of West Florida by Great Britain as the key to the mouths of the Mississippi. The foot-notes to the letters, unless otherwise marked, were added by the writer to the copies which he sent to President J. Q. Adams.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.¹

PARIS, 3^d October, 1782.

MY LORD, — Finding the day of my arrival here made too busy by Mr. Oswald and Mr. Jay, for waiting upon Dr. Franklin, I postponed my visit till the day following, when I went to Passy, and rode out with Dr. Franklin alone.

After much general conversation, he told me that he did not know what Mr. Rayneval had been doing in London, nor what the French Court were doing, but he thought the Court of London had now taken a prudent step, and from which he did not suppose any harm could arise to them. As I had gently opened the way to these conversations I hinted at the wish I had that a Federal union might now follow in order to induce him to speak about the means preparatory to a reconciliation, concerning which I knew he had put some thoughts to paper. To this he answered that they had yet no instructions here from Congress on the subject, and that the effects of such attempts could not be immediate on account of the sensations still prevailing in America. Seeing him not ripe on this day for his communications, I left the subject quiet for another moment when he might become more perfect in the sentiments of M. de Vergennes, and the proceedings of Mr. Oswald.

I returned the next day, Sunday, but I found company.

On Tuesday I went again and when we were alone, finding after some pause that he did not open himself, I said with a smile, "Well, Sir, when am I to get my dismissal?" but I understood from him in return, though without his using any precise words, that he would see about it. As I know him well, and have informed him of all the

¹ B. V., in the interval between the dates of the preceding and following letters, went to London, and returned by desire of Lord Lansdowne to Paris. While in London the business of Mr. Rayneval and the amendment to the Commission under the great seal to Mr. Oswald, took place.

[The second commission to Mr. Oswald, authorizing him to treat with the Commissioners of the United States of America, was dated September 21, 1782. It is printed in Wharton's *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, vol. v. pp. 748-750. — Eds.]

circumstances under which I remain at Paris, it was impossible for me not to be stopped for the time, by this answer.

Willing however to get as near to his meaning as I could, I introduced the mention of Mr. Oswald, which procured me the knowledge of his remaining unapprised of anything having at that time passed between Mr. Jay and Mr. Oswald, further than the exchange of powers.

The circumstance of M. de Rayneval's being in London, I must inform your Lordship, has been in a manner formally canvassed between the American Commissioners and the Court of France. I have said what I could to make their first jealousies subside and vanish; and Mr. Oswald has done the same. This gentleman's (M. Rayneval's) absence and return have been sufficiently known, however, to persons of information as I had the honor to hint to your Lordship.

But to proceed to Mr. Jay (who, I must confirm to your Lordship, is a truly amiable and sensible man, with ideas of a gentleman, and a frankness and decision that do him considerable honor). Mr. Jay, when I saw him first upon my late arrival, approved the step that England had taken, and appeared to enter into the feelings of England. He hoped that your Lordship as a wise man would take the moment to associate to yourself those that had quitted you and were inclined to return to you. He said respecting America that no apparent obstacle stood in the way of an immediate framing of a treaty, and that America would not upon such an occasion stand for a few acres. As for regaining the affections of America, time, he thought, would be required, and that it would be in vain to stop the treaty for it now, but in a few years things would become right probably for some wise association or other, because common interests would generate it. As to the Court of France, he did not seem of opinion that they had been frank about the late proceedings, and that very possibly in the course of the treaty they might offend Congress by appearing interested.

As the subject of West Florida strikes my mind every hour with more force, and meets with great countenance from authority I respect here, I beg to treat it at some little length, and in a way that I think must appear interesting.

I have before had the honor of relating to your Lordship that the Spanish, Mexican and our own Jamaica trade, (in the way of import) chiefly passed through the gulf of Florida; that the gulf has Cuba for the base of it, and the Providence Islands and East Florida for its two sides. That without Georgia and West Florida, East Florida could scarcely be retained or be worth retaining; that though the passage to West Florida outwards was longer than the passage to Jamaica, yet that the passage from West Florida was shorter home; that West Florida had several small rivers whose sources and mouths with the

trade they implied were wholly under its command ; that the Mississippi, that straight, powerful, and extensive stream, though in general it was ascended with difficulty, might be attempted with success in the season of the freshets ; that the supply of those who settled on its eastern banks and streams, would either come from our connections on the river or lakes of Canada, or overland from the same connections on the western coast of the Atlantic ; that war, the fear of taxes or the hope of plenty, had of late driven or led swarms of American Colonists into that neighborhood (the Mississippi) ; that even as mere speculating traders it might be advantageous to us to be near the seat proper for purchasing the vessels, raw materials and provisions that came down the Mississippi ; but that as merchants it was of the utmost consequence to post ourselves where the materials of payment were to issue, in order to lessen the risk and term of credit of the trade.

To these considerations I proceed to add as follows : West Florida, in point of defence, is in a manner insular, being bounded by sea southward, our own lands eastward, American lands northward, and a deep broad river westward, with uninhabited lands contiguous. West Florida therefore against France or Spain, has all, or more than the advantages of an island, respecting its security from attack ; and as to America, as she appears well inclined to our possessing this territory, it is a certain proof that she means to be on good terms with us ; since if she looked for an enemy there, she would prefer the Spaniards as being backward in enterprise and easiest to dislodge. West Florida, I acknowledge, seems but a narrow strip of country, and cannot, by any treaty at the present moment, be enlarged, but considering the little present value of the back lands to Georgia, the few settlers on them to complain of the change of government, the probability that if England does not find her account in this possession, she will hereafter give it up to France or Spain, or let them take it by ill defending it, or think of enlarging it by improper means ; considering also, the present disposition of America, not to hesitate about a few acres of land, and the probability that this temper will increase ; with the use to America of having England as a trading and consuming customer in those parts, and as a military people interposed between themselves and the enterprises of the invaders ; I say, considering all these things, with the power that Congress has in various ways of making up the sacrifice to Georgia, I incline to hope that after a term West Florida, if found at present deficient, will by a second treaty be formed into a province of just size. The Floridas, once in our possession, and inhabited, we shall have a convenient seat whence to inspect the territory and trade of Cuba and the Mexican gulf, and as a part of the force meant for the use of Florida might reside at Jamaica, the territory of that island would thence become more safe as well as the trade. The Floridas

and our West India islands too have great relation to all the attacks upon the territory surrounding the Mexican gulf, because the attack may be prepared in an island to windward, and Florida will receive whatever our success or misfortune makes it necessary should fall to leeward. Florida too (either out of its own soil, or the Ohio and Mississippi) will furnish provisions for any such attack, even though America should take part against us nationally. The vicinity of West Florida to the Isthmus of Panama is another advantage which I cannot hold as speculative; for if it is wished to make an impression on the western side of Spanish America, nothing can be clearer, than that, instead of going round by Cape Horn (as Anson did) or through the broad part of the Continent (as the late Ministry were doing) the easiest way is to establish a passage across the neck of the Continents, where water carriage also will assist, by which course the troops and stores might easily pass, and nothing but ships of war need hazard the long voyage by sea. A lodgment of this kind, aided by Florida, would have the most serious consequences if well supported, as the Spaniards could not for many months send circuitous succors to the relief of this western coast. In short, and with America consenting, West Florida seems an important possession, and which may as well receive as give away inhabitants; for though some of our settlers may advance northward, other American citizens may descend southward, (both as merchants and even as planters) so that it need not be considered as a necessary drain upon us for people, should we think of possessing it, particularly as many loyalists who are discontented and unhappy under the American Governments may think proper to sell, and remove there, where the land is so fertile, and we may likewise make this one of the places where we may dispose of our refugees (who should, however, be planted near the sea coast) to avoid the renewal of our quarrels with the American Colonies. Your Lordship is best aware whether the possession which I speak of, must arise to you out of treaty or out of conquest; but it stands within my information to say that to obtain it during war is not in the least degree impossible, when we have idle troops, the season, a fleet, and secrecy in our favor. By secrecy I mean, that an expedition from America for this purpose would, at its offset, appear intended for the West India islands, or South American Continent to windward, and that among the islands, it would appear for the islands, or continent to leeward, or else for Jamaica, and least of all for West Florida, which we have hitherto treated as a useless neglected country, and which seems the farthest of all objects for our choice.

I do not mention the logwood cutters, &c., and the settlers we have had in the Mexican gulf, because I do not know the intention of Ministry respecting them; but if they are meant to be at all considered,

there is no doubt that they will be considered by the retention of Florida. If I may speak freely, I must say farther, that while wars are among our foolish customs, I cannot see why the gulf of Mexico should not as well belong to England as to Spain.

I have formerly spoken of Canada to your Lordship, and I now presume to repeat the mention of it because of the necessary connection of it with the above system; Canada must be defended, and the troops withdrawn from other parts will make the defence of it easy. Under these circumstances the river St. Lawrence, the lakes, the Ohio, and the Mississippi will form a trading coast at the back of the American Colonies, somewhat as the Atlantic does in front.

The same fund of troops will serve to furnish another supply to secure Halifax, that important port, now Boston is gone, as well as that important neighborhood to our fisheries.

There is at times some whispering at this place about Newfoundland; and certainly in the hurricane season of the West Indies, it is easy to run up troops there from the West Indies, in order to attack it. I should grieve to hear it was gone, and equally that it was not retaken or restored, because if peace left it in the hands of an enemy, I am sure it would in England serve as a perpetual theme and motive for renewing the absurdities of war.

But it is time to quit these subjects, with which I fear I may have oppressed your Lordship. I shall only add, therefore, under this head, that I hope the treaty that is now so happily begun will meet with no delay in London. Expedition is necessary to get out of the reach of interruption from the French, and it is necessary to get out of the reach of interruption from Mr. Adams. This gentleman may probably soon be here,¹ and as he is not softened by English connections or conversation; as he has received like impressions with Mr. Laurens, and is very warm and ambitious, I will not answer for the mischief he may do; he will choose to alter some things, probably to show his influence at least, and as he cannot alter them for the better (so admirably are the two residents here affected to us) it may be feared he will alter them for the worse.² If he finds opposition in this, he may write for Mr. Laurens to aid him; as I should be sorry to see that gentleman at Paris, I hope he will find no difficulties in his passage for America.

Since my return to Paris, I have seen Mr. Fitzherbert in company,

¹ Mr. Adams was still at The Hague. He did not reach Paris until October 29. — Eds.

² All this was said before the writer had the slightest personal knowledge of Mr. Adams, who afterwards agreeably disappointed the writer's expectations, which had been founded upon the reports of American loyalists in London and on the statements of young men at Paris. This will be stated in a separate paper, in which the merits of the American Commissioners will be compared, much to the credit (it is to be hoped) of Mr. Adams.

and on the whole have been much satisfied with him. As Governor Franklin is now arrived, I presume to remind your Lordship of the intimations of his son, and the seasonable effect a compliment in that quarter would have upon your American affairs.¹

I must now beg permission to conclude with much apology for the length of my letter. I could add much to it, but a part of what I might have to say, I shall not choose to trust to paper, and the rest relative to my mother's sister, Mrs. Gould, wife of the late General Gould, I must reserve for a future moment.

I have the honor to be, my Lord, as ever, your Lordship's faithful and respectful servant.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELburnE.

PARIS, October 11th 1782.

MY LORD, — I am now about to presume to mention to your Lordship the reasons why I think the paper lately sent over by our friend Mr. Oswald (namely, the project of a treaty) is wise and fit for Britain to accede to.²

In the first place the lands given in it are such as Britain could not immediately cultivate, on account of the many lands and few inhabitants now left to her; and they are also such as she could not immediately defend, because so near to the Americans and so distant from ourselves. A dispute about them would prolong the war, either without securing the lands in question or, if it seemed to secure them, it would leave sure grounds for a future war. Since Americans both in spite of England and of Congress would imperceptibly settle there, and if attempted to be controlled or ejected, would certainly resist. The title of an ancient navigator upon the coast to possess the land internally for his prince would not to these settlers seem at all comparable to the right of a cultivator on the spot, who risked his life, fortune, and labor on the

¹ In one of his earliest letters from Paris to Lord Shelburne, July 31, 1782, Mr. Vaughan wrote: "Young Mr. Franklin, I have to inform your Lordship, has intimated hopes to see something done for his father, Gov. Franklin, as being the only Governor that gave to his Court plain and wholesome advice before the war. I asked him what his father would relish? He replied, something probably in the corps diplomatique. This, therefore, is another important matter to keep in mind." As the Hon. C. F. Adams very justly remarks, in his *Life of John Adams*, "There is no reason to suppose that Dr. Franklin had the remotest suspicion of this intrigue." (See *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. i. p. 373 n.) — Eds.

² The articles agreed on by Mr. Oswald on the one part, and Benjamin Franklin and John Jay on the other, were sent to England by Mr. Oswald Oct. 8, 1782, for the king's approval. They are printed in Wharton's *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, vol. v. pp. 805-807. — Eds.

attempt. A resistance on such an occasion would be very stubborn, as it would be a resistance in behalf of property, and not of fashions of government. I repeat therefore with submission, that these lands are not worth the cavil, as we cannot get through them except through an American country, as the use from them is not to be immediate, and as in future time a quarrel about them seems inevitable, when America, who is on the spot, shall have doubled her force, and our own resources will be at a stand, distant, and not worth employing upon so small an occasion; especially when the benefits of a union on the other hand are considered. So much for the back lands.

As to the fishing, whoever considers the ease with which a fishing vessel slides out to sea, and when at sea advances to its station, and whoever considers the little power we can have of controlling the operations of the American ports, will at the same time see the impossibility of controlling their fishery. We might as well think of making game laws for them. To check their fishing is checking the habits and profession of a large body of their people, depriving them of an article of food and of commerce; forbidding them the use of the water which lies before their eyes, and to which they think they have as much right as to their land; laying the seeds of immediate jealousies and of future wars; throwing them into the hands of France, and inducing them to propose attempts to our enemies upon Newfoundland; seeking to prohibit an employment to which our own subjects themselves would naturally invite them in some shape, and making hostile to us a resource that we may incorporate into our own navy or our own commerce. Can any one tell me what is to hinder the sailors, bred up in this occupation, and who speak our own tongue so as to pass for English, from entering our frigates or privateers as Englishmen, or conducting our different trades for us in war instead of ignorant dubious Flemings, so as to admit our turning all our own hands to fighting without injury to those trades? How long meagre fish days will last in Europe none of us can tell, nor can we be certain that improvements in natural history may not shortly introduce these or other fish on other coasts, a scheme which I think very practicable. For my own part I am inclined to think that when America swells her people America herself will furnish the principal market for her own fish; and I am sure, there are enough fish there at present for all Europe.¹

In short, on the footing of the proposed treaty there will be harmony now and hereafter between us; they will give us various provisions for our own fishermen on the barren soil of New England (which will put us on a more equal footing), and feel an interest in preserving that soil

¹ This proves in some degree true; but the American farmer supplies himself in most instances, with animal food, from his own lands. What might be affected by management is too much left to accident in most countries.

as a fishing station in our hands. On a different footing a third party may be introduced into the system, and two of the three become our enemies or jealous rivals. And as America is so much nearer to the spot, if she does not by the aid of France wrest the island itself out of her hands, she will prove a slight terror to our fishermen, whose profession obliges them to be dispersed on the sea in small vessels without force, near to the American coasts. It is, I conceive, a point to be considered in this affair, that as the fishermen will only come from the Northern provinces, that profession will be somewhat less encouraged than if all the American provinces eventually participated, and perhaps this exclusive advantage attending the Northern provinces may be one among other motives why the naval power of G. Britain should be more looked to by Congress than otherwise.

But I am now come to a more serious business than either of the above, considered, indeed, not in itself, but in relation to the prejudices of our countrymen: I mean the admission of the Americans to the power of participating in our carrying trade; (for this is a consequence of the individuals of each people entering the other ports on the same terms as their respective natives.) Between the two main countries (as between Philadelphia and London) it may be said that the conditions are equal; but America has no West India Colonies, and therefore the bargain is unequal, and the same inequality also, it may be said, subsists relatively to foreign trade, of which we have much and they little.¹

My answer to these objections will be at length, but I hope to the purpose.

1st. Our own realms at home are bounded by nature, but not so America, (who in forty years will probably have as many people as ourselves, and in eighty years more may have eighty millions.) If they have advantage, therefore, at first, the scale will at last balance to us, producing to us by much the most advantage.²

2^d. I think America is overrated in its tendency to be a maritime power. It is not an island like Great Britain or Ireland; it has but one side of its square that is a coast, and hitherto sailors have only been found in a part of that side, and those chiefly from the islands of that part. To become sailors they have had hitherto the temptations of fishing, shipbuilding, foreign trade in their small vessels, and the habit of their ancestors. Shipping or the carrying trade when left to itself, is of all others most likely to be governed by average prices; it being the first principle of a ship to change its place, and to be found in all parts; and therefore the carrying trade alone is never to be set down as a lucrative trade where rivals are admitted; and of course I should

¹ The project of the treaty sent to London included a proposition of this kind.

² This will be shown in a separate paper (lately written) to have been a fair guess at the moment. October, 1827.

not expect to find the Americans much given to it. When another lucrative profession is joined to it, as fishing or shipbuilding, the case becomes a mixed one, and the navigation is no longer pursued for itself alone. Fishing, I have before mentioned, and do not revive the subject; as to shipbuilding (depending much on the price of timber), it will receive a check in a country where the maritime timber is continually growing scarcer; had not the American vessels become discredited with us, as being soon worn out (a fault now likely to be corrected), and had not their size been small, from the smallness of capital in those who built them, I am convinced that Europeans would have left fewer vessels in the American hands, and the carrying trade, &c., have therefore been less their interest.

3^d. Fact proves all this; for where the carrying trade could easily be shared, or naturally be monopolized, it usually came into the hands of the mother country. (As to the southward, for instance, where the capitals nevertheless were not inconsiderable.) Let the navigation then still be left to nature, which has hitherto so well served us. The northern people have their views as much turned to the back settlements as Europe has them turned to America; and except the mere coast inhabitants there is scarce a man among them that would not prefer a life spent in cultivating a rich soil to dangers and a barren sea.

4th. But our merchants can easily make up the want of laws (perhaps by private combinations), for there are various reasons why the merchant who loads, advances, and commands the port, should appoint the carrier.

5th. From the East India trade and Hudson's Bay trade, they are very much, by the form of the trading companies there, shut out. Of African negroes they will buy but few, under their modern laws, at least for themselves, and Liverpool will carry it against them for our islands, (as it does against London and Bristol) on account of its enterprising spirit, its habit, its neighborhood to Manchester which produces the chief articles of that trade, and its favorable situation; not to mention that the value of the ship is so small in this trade that it is of little account. The North or Baltic trade America will not be fond of encouraging unless by accident, as it will in several respects hurt their own; and it belongs to us to choose from what country we shall command these stores.

I think, therefore, that besides the fisheries, the West India commerce is that for which we have most to fear; as they might carry sugars directly to foreigners without stopping to be manufactured at home. But this circumstance is so trivial, compared to the whole, and such connections are so liable to fluctuation, that I should think a bond to land them in Britain or America might pacify our bakers and merchants in part. The planters will not be sorry on their side to extend their markets.

6th. A close trade on the plan of the navigation act, will introduce a sense of diverse interests; will take away the air of communion, and all that difference of exertion which is seen when men are only half pleased or dubious, or completely pleased; which amounts to the difference between precaution and lukewarmness, or open-heartedness and zeal.

7th. If America doubts, she will then look to other people, and I am free to say that this is almost the only moment, that either cures our wounds or leaves them open; that keeps America to ourselves or leaves her to become neutral, or to side with France.

8th. I acknowledge that sometimes strength of mind is wanted in all classes at home, but great events usually require risks. I think there is very little risk, here, however, and I am sure, when America is so nearly in our hands, and so sound, and so distinct; and the terms of our enemies are now on your carpet, that there seems but little room for doubt, and still less for delay.

9th. If you make navigation laws against the Americans, the Americans will do the same against you.

Probably haste may make me write with improper zeal, but I have been somewhat indisposed and much interrupted, particularly in this latter part.

I now beg permission to add a few articles. I am uneasy for the East Indies, for reasons perhaps not unknown to your Lordship, though as yet I have no idea of Madras being gone. Preparations are also making for the West Indies. M. Vaudreuille, having coasted America, is arrived at Boston, having lost a 74. by unskilfulness.¹

Mr. Jay, I must add, assures me as a gentleman, that his letters from America are not desponding, but speak of great powers for war, and of good management. He says the troops have rarely wanted what the country could give. I am convinced, however, that taxes in money are almost impracticable to the north.

Florida, if attacked, I must add, would be liable to have all the enemy's force from windward to relieve it, unless the utmost secrecy be used. But if Panama be possessed we can easily send our troops across, after the Spaniards have begun to send them round.

With the utmost haste I have the honor to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's ever faithful and respectful servant.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

PARIS, October 29th, 1782.

MY LORD, — I am not to pretend to enter into the reasons of the politics of our Court, but I believe your Lordship will not fail to indulge me in giving attention to the views I may offer of things.

¹ The terrible and repeated naval actions between Mr. Jeffries and Sir Edward Hughes were now in train in the East Indies and justified this remark.

I hear of doubts about closing with the offers of reciprocal trade. I should be very sorry to hear that Parliament, however, had to debate anything but the characters of the ministers who make the treaty, for if they have to debate the treaty itself, I am pretty well aware of the difficulties that will be made to occur. Few articles of it will be more liable to the intrigues and cabals of interested men than this mixture of trading, notwithstanding the good sense of the measure, and notwithstanding the obvious cure of its inconveniences by making free ports in England. Free ports will render England the waiting place and mart of the whole connection, make her the centre of this carrying trade, and give her merchants the first chance of all speculations in the way both of export and import.

This reciprocal trade, however, is nothing to compare with the question of Boundaries as it is now agitated. I profess not to understand why a meridional line is talked of east of the Mississippi. But that your Lordship may be in a proper condition to understand all that relates to this measure, I beg to relate a few facts, perhaps in part unknown.

France by treaty in 1763 guarantied the British boundaries to America. Spain [who signed the same treaty] assented by her silence to that guarantee, for a number of years. Since the capture (as I think) of West Florida, the French Minister (as is supposed) in Spain, has suggested to Spain a claim to these back lands. Spain, however, has not argued so ably for them as France has done in her behalf. Your Lordship will guess what some conclude from all this; particularly after Mr. Rayneval's avowed appearance in London. It is this. That Spain has been led in this by France, and has confirmed herself in her views by her avarice. That France is led, on her side, by her anxiety to see Spain amused and America embarrassed with Spain and with England, but that the real interest of England in this affair is without explanation. I am sorry to add, as a second fact, that this request on the part of England was expected, as a consequence of a supposed secret understanding between the Courts of France and London. I am still more sorry to add, as a third fact, that if England insists upon this line, the treaty will certainly break off. Congress has given but few instructions, but those instructions are peremptory. Boundaries are necessarily the first of them, and therefore a voyage to America and back again will be necessary before they can be altered by the Commissioners here, and we are afraid here that Congress will rather extend than retract her instructions. I think this fact of immense importance. It is with equal certainty that I tell your Lordship that if the treaty does break off there seems nothing left for America but to make her bond closer with France, by an alliance after the war perhaps.

On the other hand, this line being given up, I can tell your Lordship, that France has taken a part of such immense imprudence in openly

contravening the interests of America, that (with other matters which it belongs to us to suggest) a most capital ground of jealousy is laid open to divide and separate them, perhaps, forever. This, therefore, is a strong reason for England to step in now.

May I be permitted to add reasonings to facts? The American Commissioners, without the secret intrigues above conjectured at to enlighten them, would have expected England's claims to have been to the north to help Canada or Acadia, or to the south to help Florida. It seems they are west; that is, they shut up the Mississippi in effect from the American colonies, and if there is no egress there, it is plain there will be no ingress, or in other words if there are no settlers (on the banks of this river) there will be no consumers. England it seems would rather have trees there than men; than men, who, if they consumed her goods, would, by paying taxes upon them, be in this form equivalent to subjects, especially taking in the probability of active national aid, and the moral certainty of neutrality. If your Lordship rode over the thickets of Epping forest, and were told of attempts . . . to prohibit petty thefts of cottagers upon the Common, by taking in of land, it might make you a little smile. How much more to hear of attempts to check settlers, two, four, eight hundred miles deep in a country of such thickets, where every inhabitant contested the lord of the manor's title? where there was a sea of three thousand miles to cross to come at the manor, and a powerful intervening territory of two or three hundred miles by land? where if the settlers were few they would not be worth notice, and if many they would defy notice. My Lord, I beg indulgence of your Lordship for my familiarity; perhaps I had better not proceed.

Let me close then by comforting your Lordship with assurances that Mr. Adams is sufficiently well disposed to us at present, but God Almighty defend us from delay. The Colonies settled with (and their first demands are great, because they are to be set up by England as states) the field is open before you, and I can assure your Lordship that Spain, though angry, is not wholly content with the war. But if delay be used, France must be informed of things, as she is growing highly jealous of the want of communication. France cannot, however, prevent the American Commissioners from making a good bargain with either of you, as America pleases, nor can England consistent with her interests.

If this letter is wanting in respect, I pray your Lordship to correct it by your recollections of my manners. I have not time to read it over myself. My short notice of the courier only permits my naming that this communication is in the *utmost confidence*.

I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's ever faithful and respectful servant.

BENJⁿ VAUGHAN.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

PARIS, Dec. 4th, 1782.

MY LORD, — I have the honor to inform your Lordship that I spent much time with Dr. Franklin yesterday. He expressed much curiosity, or rather *interest*, about the King's speech, and the debates of Parliament, but he gave me no private intimation, but the following concerning Gibraltar.

He said he thought it would facilitate the peace if we would consent to give it up in the way of exchange. He talked with diffidence about his advising in our affairs, but he thought we might do well to ask in return for it, Florida, Porto Rico, and the renunciation of all claims to Jamaica. Perhaps they were not all to be got, but it might be well to ask for all. He said that it had been thought important to preserve Gibraltar on account of our Mediteranean trade, and the prevention of the junction of the Toulon and Brest fleets, &c. But our Mediteranean trade, he said, was nothing, and we found that we could not succeed in keeping asunder the fleets in question. The English, he continued, formerly had Tanjore, and much was said in its favor and of its vast advantages, but after a time we found it proper to desert it and blow up the works, and we should take care we did not do the same here. He added that the best time we could dispose of it in treaty, seemed that in which we had shown that they could not take it by force. So far Dr. Franklin. For my own part I thought it very possible that before a future war the system of neutral shipping might secure the little Mediteranean trade we had left, better than Gibraltar, and at the same time protect from us the trade of our enemies, not to mention the possibility that future wars may be distant; that Spain (to which Dr. Franklin had himself alluded) may in the next war omit to employ her forces against Gibraltar; that we ourselves are obliged almost every year to run the risque of an action with our fleets, however prejudicial to our other affairs, to assist Gibraltar; that there is no tract of country or any fishery or the like to make the possession of Gibraltar particularly valuable in peace; and that nevertheless in peace we pay for a garrison there; that if we consider the peace expenses as only necessary to preserve the place against the time that war returns again, this must be put only to the head of war expenses and consequently the place in war is to be debited with double the amount of its apparent charge; that some of the troops employed upon it in peace time for garrisoning it, may be sent to strengthen us elsewhere, and the rest be disbanded; that the Spanish army kept near the place is not an army altogether raised for the purpose of a siege, but a national encampment near the place; that should Spain in another war direct her chief forces elsewhere, she

would need nothing more than her national militia to check our garri-son; that Spain will contend most and give most for it at present, because, as she has made it an object of the war, she will be desirous to hide her ignominy by the acquisition of it in a peace; that Gibraltar being in our hands had very much the appearance of being a principal motive to league Spain so closely with France, and that France seemed secretly to wish therefore that Gibraltar might still be left with us to leave Spain a future motive to act; that in future wars the coasts of France may be joined by inland artificial navigation, and the same benefit of navigation internally may be produced for Spain by very practicable canals; and that in future wars Spain (instead of being an enemy, may, by the known revolutions of affairs) become a friend, who will then let us enjoy the port gratis. These are some of the thoughts which occurred to me, while I was with Dr. Franklin, and I presume to state them to your Lordship on account of your Lordship's known goodness. I have other speculations on the subject of a less practical kind, but which I nevertheless venture to think important. For instance in reply to the objection that foreign settlements consume a capital, I answer that they consume but little capital, and make a very great one, if the settlement is only chosen with judgment. By the time that a West India or a North American merchant gets his account paid, it will be found that at least half of it is swelled by commission and interest and the commission and interest of the separate tradesmen he employs, so that the effect of a settlement is rather suspending the use of half the apparent capital in question, in order to augment it by the other half. The fact is proved by an enquiry into the progress of every private merchant's fortune, who from £5,000 gets to £50,000, and by adding economy puts into the account compound interest. It is also proved, by looking at the progress of a West India planter, who becomes rich from still less capital than a merchant; nature giving him immense returns which he purchases rather with labor and risque of life than with capital.

Florida and Porto Rico can give new farms to add to England with all the attendant advantages which I have formerly had the honor of hinting; Porto Rico having even a capital fortification ready made to our hands. Besides, I am convinced that as far as Britain wants capital to fill her public loans that this bagatelle thus purloined may easily be made up; first, by facilitating the means which our country people have of getting at the funds; next, by taking wise measures to increase the English wealth during the peace; then by hinting the same to other Europeans who are our lenders; and lastly by giving £10 or 20,000 to authors and news writers, to write down war in the opinions of foreign nations and of ourselves (which they would do in an age, by the help of wit and ridicule).

But I beg pardon for taking up your Lordship's time with what either is so familiar to yourself, or perhaps is mistaken. I must only presume to touch on those things which are to be learnt singly at Paris.

Under this head, I must put a disinclination to a certain person,¹ who has twice appeared in this quarter of the world. I will not enter into particulars, unless I am commanded by your Lordship upon this subject, but I must assure your Lordship in general, (and even that it is painful enough) that his return here, particularly to settle liberal systems, will give so much dissatisfaction, that I should hope it will never be thought of. There is a something in manners that strikes, and that strikes so powerfully at times as to spoil all superior business; and still more is there something that is found in the place of confidence that causes impediment and injury. I am very much hurt at saying these things, but my duty and my affection to your Lordship are paramount to all as I speak to your Lordship with security. When this gentleman arrived (so little does the business of places interest me) I had thought him your Lordship's secretary, and as such had spoken to him in a style of confidence, which that circumstance alone had created. It was not long before his manners announced to me how much I was mistaken.

Dr. Franklin, and all the gentlemen here, are I believe looking out for the time when you shall remove the rubbish of acts of Parliament. Dr. Franklin's behavior is such as indeed flatters me; but I am very sorry to hear him talk of our spending evenings together at Passy. It looks as if he had more steps in his business than your Lordship would like. In all events, your Lordship is assured how much I have the honor to be, as far as I can answer for myself,

My Lord, your Lordship's ever faithful and respectful servant.

BENJⁿ VAUGHAN.

There is a story about the Duc de Chartres and Fitzjames tumbling down Mount Cenis, which the Duchesse de Chartres last night said was not announced to her. Prince Nassau sets out to-day to go with M. D'Estaing (as I learn from his most intimate friend). The Count D'Estaing has not yet been heard of from Madrid.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

PARIS, Dec. 7th, 1782.

MY LORD,—I have again seen Dr. Franklin this morning, and I find him in his usual good dispositions towards your Lordship, and your Lordship's public objects and private connections.

¹ Mr. Strachey.

He spoke, however, with some regret concerning the omission of the article for the reciprocity of commerce, and thought "we had missed it," and might not again find so favorable a moment. He assured me, as they have *all* done repeatedly, *except* Mr. Laurens (with whom I am *not* confidential, though I have again become on *civil* terms) that they have exceeded their instructions respecting the refugees; and that they expect to be reprimanded. Indeed, it is a remark of the Dr.'s that peacemakers in this world usually get abused; and Dr. Franklin is confident that, had they carried their concessions to the extent we wished, Congress would either not have ratified the treaty, or not have had it in their power to have executed it. He is civil enough to impute much of the little he has given his assent to, to the effect of personal measures and motives; his conduct being evidently altered after the communications I made to him upon my return from London; (of which the best proof is to be collected from the letter or memorial he read on this subject to the Commissioners on the morning of the day on which I arrived at Paris.)

They have got the pamphlets which have been written against your Lordship; but I do not find the three old Commissioners influenced by them. I think they are pretty much in the habit of directing their expectations of receiving what is favorable to the general cause from your Lordship. Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay your Lordship was before sure of, and Mr. Adams has since been so much attached as to speak very respectfully indeed of your Lordship and your counsels.

As to the reception which the Courts of France and Spain give to the American preliminaries, your Lordship will perhaps be interested to hear that it is good tempered. Count d'Aranda said Mr. Oswald had been "*diablement fin*"; and that considering the proximity of America and its increasing power, the lands and fishery were wisely managed; and that treaties were not to be made for the moment. He seemed to think slightly, rather, of the probability of peace, and I found that Porto Rico (as I suppose on account of both Courts) was not to be given up in the present treaty.

The motives of this apparent tranquillity in these two Courts, I apprehend, may be interpreted without much difficulty. They wish for peace, and are therefore pleased to see no obstacles occur, but from their own demands. They are content also, that we have stopped short of the mischief we might have done them by not proceeding to reunion and reciprocal commerce. The present treaty, too, being reasonable and mutual, they must not affect to blame it; particularly when by commending it they think they may put America in the wrong, should she desert them at this conjuncture. But besides the above reasons, there are others still stronger. Their late advices from America, for instance, bespeak such strength in their party, that probably they

think the Commissioners will not be hardy enough to proceed to any great lengths with England. And, on the other hand, I am inclined to suspect, that even if the French Court felt a disposition to complain, they would suppress it, from the consciousness of the tricks they have played America, and the fear of bringing forwards explanations. Besides, I am much disposed to give credit to Count Vergennes for that kind of good sense which goes to conciliation, and to his making the best of things by putting up with a first loss.

When we first calculated their resentments here upon the subject of a set of preliminaries formed without their privity, we thought that England would have gone deeper into the business, and have made the whole matter sure before Parliament could have interfered, and consequently that these Courts would have had more in them to disconcert them. That the treaty was kept from this Court till it was signed (at least in all its material points) your Lordship may rest most perfectly convinced; as I conceive that I possess the fullest evidences and assurances on the subject, which shows America to be *sui juris*, and that England, with good management, may even yet do well in spite of France. And that something were now settled is devoutly to be wished, as I have seen late letters which intimate considerable perfection in some branches of the French manufactures (and particularly in those which are meant to rival the fabrics and colors of the Manchester articles of trade); and likewise as I hear of many attempts in America to make the French and native manners meet.

I understand that nothing has yet been done with the Dutch, unless within these few days; but I learn from Dr. Franklin that they talk of restitution of places, and a free navigation. The last, the Dr. supposes that other powers will go so near to establish that it may be as well to give it them. As to restitution of places, . . . for I do not learn that they talk of damages, the French have made this easy, having themselves retaken the West India possessions and having given their own example for restoring the rest in other parts of the world. Though the Dutch are said not to have negotiated directly, yet I think they may at least look to Count Vergennes not to be absolutely neglected.

But I believe I am touching upon a very serious subject, in a very hazardous way. What I have said will nevertheless show your Lordship the state of information at Paris upon these interesting points. I proceed with permission to two or three articles of news.

The first is from Mrs. Izard, who informs me that Mr. Izard writes her (dated October 30th) that a committee of Congress were sitting upon the case of Capt. Asgill, and that to prevent further outrages they had been once much disposed to retaliate upon him, but a letter from Count Vergennes having arrived informing them of Lady Asgill's

letter to the Queen, the matter had taken a new turn, and there was every appearance (in Mr. Izard's opinion) that he would be saved. This intelligence will be sent to London by Mrs. Izard, but I should presume it would be very grateful to Lady Asgill to receive the first accounts from your Lordship. The affair, I think, was to be decided Oct. 31st.¹

I have also the honor to inform your Lordship that Mr. Wynne (a Jamaica gentleman brought in prisoner here) was informed by a vessel he spoke with, that this vessel had kept company with the *Ville de Paris*, seven or more days after the storm, and that the *Ville de Paris* finally bore away to the Azores. On the other hand, the French have lost a sixty-four near Bermudas, but have saved the crew. She was convoying (with three frigates) a *St. Domingo* fleet, of which a number are stated to have been lost in a storm.

I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's ever faithful and ever respectful servant.

BENJⁿ VAUGHAN.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

PARIS, Dec. 10th, 1782.

MY LORD, — As Dr. Franklin has intimated that they would make up here in national advantages what they have been unable to do as yet in personal compliments, I think your Lordship will not be dissatisfied at a review of their past declarations and performances to judge of the attention due to their present intimation.²

¹ Captain Charles Asgill had been selected as the subject for retaliation for the execution of Captain Huddy, but was finally set at liberty. In his letter to Count Vergennes, announcing Asgill's release, Washington writes: "Captain Asgill has been released, and is at perfect liberty to return to the arms of an affectionate parent, whose pathetic address to your Excellency could not fail of interesting every feeling heart in his behalf. I have no right to assume any particular merit from the lenient manner in which this disagreeable affair has terminated. But I beg you to believe, Sir, that I most sincerely rejoice, not only because your humane intentions are gratified, but because the event accords with the wishes of his Most Christian Majesty, and his royal and amiable consort, who, by their benevolence and munificence, have endeared themselves to every true American." Sparks's Writings of Washington, vol. viii. p. 364. — Eps.

² This had reference to the commercial treaty and the definitive treaty, both which were yet to follow, Oct. 10, 1828. — B. V.

[N. B. Mr. Adams's name was not mentioned in this letter. He came to Paris only about seven weeks before, and had been too much occupied with the negotiations to have much visiting intercourse with strangers during that period.]

Declarations.

As to refugees. The Commissioners said they could do nothing, and Dr. Franklin from the first protested that to demand it must ruin the treaty if persisted in.

As to land. The old bounds from the first were asked for. But Mr. Jay said that he would not stand for a few acres to make a peace.

As to fisheries. They said these were their bread; they must have their share, and it was best to avoid wars about it.

As to independence. Congress prohibited all treaty, unless under an acknowledgment of it, or the withdrawing of troops.

As to debts and neutrals. They had scarcely thought on this subject themselves, but the states had acted upon it separately and everything was discouraging. But they resolved to make an exertion.

Performances.

Little done, yet a door opened by which England (if she pleases) may produce much. At the same time an offer to make reparation mutually, was said to be the only just thing.

A few acres given in parts where it was convenient for England to take them.

G. Britain saw they spoke nature and sense and most wisely acceded. That is, the event has been exactly what G. B. should have wished.

Immense anxiety appeared to get over this difficulty. They were near treating without it when Mr. Jay, searching more into precedents and instructions, proved it impossible.

They exceeded their instructions. It was a concession which they put under the head of the refugees, and to stand in their account as a concession to England.

The circumstances under which all these things took place were the following. A king governed in England, whose former ministers had done a multitude of oppressive things in his name, and the prince himself was supposed tainted with prejudices of royalty at least, on the subject of America. A minister also presided who had long resisted the grant of their favourite object in America, and from whom some of their own special advocates had withdrawn themselves, under the pretences that he would not satisfy America; that he favored royalty, and that his conduct would be more objectionable than that of former ministers and infinitely more dangerous. One of the Commissioners on the part of America [Mr. Laurens] was also that minister's personal enemy, and the late advices from America had been of a complexion very adverse to this minister and very embarrassing to the Commissioners. On the other side, indeed, of the picture, we had to place the former conduct of that minister, which had been particularly generous, splendid and manly, and to add that one of the Commissioners had grounds in former times for personal respect for him.

On the whole, therefore, I hope your Lordship will find that if these gentlemen at Paris have not fulfilled all that was wished of them, yet

they have done as much as the doubts suggested from America, the fears entertained from France, and their attention to their own characters permitted. I hope also that your Lordship will find that now the Commissioners have fixed the points which respect the form and existence of their country, and the prejudices of it, you need not entertain apprehensions of their not acceding to those things in favor of England that relate to their own common interest.

Indeed, my Lord, I can scarcely sufficiently represent to your Lordship the anxiety which I have seen in some of these gentlemen, when they found it impossible to hit upon schemes friendly to your Lordship, on the subjects of the independence commencing the treaty, and the refugees. Penobscot, I think, I could not myself have given up to your Lordship. And respecting the making the treaty without the privacy of France, when it contained originally so strong an article in it as naturalizing the commerce of each party, I think this a proof both of confidence in your Lordship and sincerity in themselves. M. de Rayneval being then in London, and the breaking up of the negotiation by France and her consequent resentment being the least that was to be expected if the nature of the negotiation had then been made known. But I proceed to other subjects. . . .

Lady Juliana Penn's affair will be taken up here as belonging to your Lordship, to a very respectable lady, and to William Penn; but the other Penns stand well neither here nor in America, . . . one or two of them excepted. There will be more information shortly wrote to Lady Juliana; but at present I have to assure your Lordship that her affairs, even in their present state, are in a much better condition by far than she at present has any idea of. If she has no present remittances of money, perhaps she may in part thank those who have the care of her affairs in America, as well as recollect the general distress of all Americans in Europe.¹ . . .

A second additional circumstance to be noticed relates to my not being responsible for anything regarding the English minister here. I

¹ Lady Juliana Fermor, one of the numerous daughters of the Earl of Pomfret, married Thomas Penn, second son of the founder of Pennsylvania. Her husband died in 1775. By their marriage settlement and a provision in his last will she was entitled after his death to an annuity from his estate. During the Revolution Pennsylvania annulled the royal charter, and allotted to the proprietaries a fixed sum in payment for their unsettled lands. After the peace a further allowance was made them by Pennsylvania. (See Penn. Archives, vol. x. pp. 485-488; Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council of Penn., vol. xiv. pp. 622, 624, 625; Dictionary of National Biography, vol. xlv. pp. 304, 305.) Under date of Aug. 16, 1788, Horace Walpole writes to the Countess of Ossory, "Lady Juliana Penn, once mistress of a revenue of 36,000 *l.* a year, is now lodging modestly, humbly, and tranquilly at Petersham on 600 *l.* a year; and her mind is so reconciled to her fortune that she is still very handsome." (Letters of Horace Walpole, Cunningham's ed., vol. ix. p. 141.) — Eds.

learn things from my only sources here ; I act only in my own sphere ; and I share neither praise nor blame with these gentlemen, because it does not fall in my way to act with them. Your Lordship, even in the midst of your present occupations, will have the goodness to excuse an explanation of what might otherwise look like ill humor or insensibility.

I have sounded Dr. Franklin as to his being Minister in London, and at first he listened to me, but upon another day he affected the idea of giving up all public business and merely *visiting* England before he went to America. He talks a language in his family which agrees with this idea, but I would, nevertheless, try to divert away this idea, if I thought your Lordship would approve it. Mr. Jay, however, would do very well if the Dr. declined the situation, and the Dr. would render us service, even in America. . . . Mr. Jay is good and manly, can respect and be respected, and has a wife of good sense who can very well be received into the best companies, and be made an object of civilities and even of friendship. . . .

I have the honor to be, my Lord, as ever, your Lordship's faithful and respectful servant.

B. VAUGHAN.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

PARIS, JAN^y 5th, 1783.

MY LORD,—I am truly obliged to your Lordship for a very kind letter dated Dec. 31st.

I presume, by the tenor of it, that your Lordship foresees that my further stay here may prove frivolous, which, indeed, I had myself begun to suspect. I therefore feel a strong disposition to wish that Mr. Oswald could furnish any reasonable pretence for my returning immediately to London. It does not, however, appear, either to him or to myself, that anything new could now be added to what has been already communicated by a letter of Dec. 29th, to your Lordship, and as something may occur in answer to that letter which may put it in my power to save Mr. Oswald trouble and to give your Lordship recent information, I have resolved for the moment, contrary to my wishes, to suspend my journey, and to wait for your Lordship's despatches and the decisions which they may suggest.

Although many "private reasons" formerly combined to urge my first visit to Paris, your Lordship is sensible that no private reasons can ever arise to detain me here, and still less so when public business and your Lordship call me back again.

I earnestly hope that your Lordship may be spared any uneasiness arising from the public or individuals, on account of my long delay at this unhappy place ; as the particulars in which I may have been useful

here, if any, can never be made public; and still less so, the great object which I have always been made to have in view here. But if explanations should ever become necessary to any one, it may truly be said that my stay at Paris was in a great measure induced by the wishes of some of the American Commissioners themselves.

It is not, I presume, the late sensations of these Commissioners which your Lordship means that you are at a loss to decipher, as I have endeavoured clearly to state them to your Lordship. They have only had one doubt or anxiety, and that too occasioned by parliamentary language, which was, "lest what has been done should be undone," or lest America should individually suspect that it *might be undone*. This, I believe, has been the only fear which these gentlemen have entertained.

As to their hopes and desires, I believe they are nearly as follows. (that is, for their country; for they express none for themselves).

1^s. That they may be without future wars, unless of their own choosing.

2^d. That the wars which they have may be made milder.

3^d. That they may be spared the expense and mutual punishment, of revengeful prohibitory laws in trade.

4th. That English rather than French ideas and manners may prevail in America.

5th. That England rather than France may receive such benefits as their trade and alliance can give, as England is the country they most love, and which will make the best use of these advantages and give them the most in return for them.

6th. That England should make an intimate union of some sort, rather than an alliance with them, as being both the surest and the least dangerous means for obtaining the above ends. But as such an union requires liberal principles, they fear that England will not in all points go hand in hand with them, as several hints or propositions made to her to this effect have been declined.

Such is the single fear, and such are the several wishes of the Commissioners. A short word will state their circumstances. They have signed a treaty which will disgust in America those who are to pay debts, those who are to restore estates, those who are to make money by war, those who are suspicious of England, and those whom the money, politics, or conduct of France have corrupted or deceived. Doubtless there are many in America whom this treaty is to please; but unfortunately the other contracting party is pretended (upon high authority) to have doubted whether it is binding or not.¹ At the same

¹ N. B. Lord Lansdown had said, in reply to a question put to him in the House of Lords, that "if France made no peace, the provisional articles, as being contingent or eventual, will cease to be binding." This was said suddenly and theoretically.

time, their present ally is not at all pleased with the dispositions which this treaty has made known, nor the mode in which it was signed.

Now, when your Lordship recollects that these Commissioners are reputed agents, and not the rulers of America, that they are instructed, and may be punished for acting without or against instructions, I am convinced that, as a man of the world and of candor, you will feel their situation to be critical.

They have nevertheless done us some service. Besides secretly signing a very offensive treaty with us, they have tried to restore English and eradicate French connections, by giving the leaders of Congress a history of French intrigues, and a recommendation of the English system. The only check that has been put to the progress of these things has come, not from American Commissioners, but incidentally from English Ministers in public debates, and it has operated chiefly through the hands of individuals and not of the Commissioners, who are themselves confounded by it, principally as it may hurt this system.

In this situation they will however find it difficult to fly in the face of the French Court, more than they have done already. Nobody can doubt that for their own sakes, they have recommended a general peace, as much as they thought they could do it with success and propriety; and there is also no doubt (whatever they may say to us) that they will and must still recommend it. They have also openly enforced their recommendation by the treaty they have signed, which has had considerable operation, and they have secretly prepared, as much as lies in their power, a still more powerful second to their entreaties in America itself.

I think the preliminary treaty has been signed five weeks. Five weeks, my Lord, is rather quick for them to begin to menace an ally, that is at this moment lending them money. Five weeks, too, is rather soon for England to give America up, when such circumstances of doubt have been thrown in the way of the connection by others.

I might have mentioned it as a seventh wish of the Commissioners that England, who best knows her own plans, should (as soon as rendered possible by the situation of her affairs) take some confirmatory measure respecting what was done on Nov. 30th.

Will your Lordship exercise your usual goodness to forgive these freedoms? This sort of language I can hold to no person upon earth but your Lordship and Mr. Oswald.

I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's ever faithful and respectful servant.

BENJ^N VAUGHAN.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

PARIS, Jan^y 12th, 1783.

MY LORD, — I called this morning upon Mr. Adams, in order to give favorable impressions relative to the Penn family. I entered as usual, but he received me with particular attention and cheerfulness, and after giving the go-by to that subject, he told me he had some communications to make relative to French intrigues, and though it might be said that he touched upon these things because he was personally concerned in them, yet it would not follow from thence that the French had not been intriguing. The communications are not striking upon any other account than as they demonstrate the conduct of France, the temper of America, and the character of Mr. Adams, and as they confirm the propriety of the grant in the article of the fisheries. He divided his communication into two parts, and showed me all his original documents relative to the subject.¹

He said first that he had been chosen *sole* Commissioner, because in all his speeches in Congress he had maintained that G. Britain was not to be distressed to a greater degree than was necessary to enable America to preserve her liberties and her engagements. As he was attached to England therefore, Congress thought they could trust him with a commission to make peace, and a second commission to make a treaty of commerce, without giving him any person to share with him. Count Vergennes, he said, knew this motive on the part of Congress, and therefore intrigued against him to get those commissions revoked, and particularly to get Dr. Franklin named in a new one. The commissions, which were dated Sept. 29, 1779,² were accordingly revoked by a resolution which assigned no reason for revoking them; and in July, 1781, (I think) came out the second commission to five gentlemen which now subsists; and in which Mr. Adams says he was named, because he could not be omitted with any decency. He says that the French insinuated that it would be proper to have several Commissioners on account of its being necessary to make a sort of show in favor of America that was respectable at the then intended Congress at Vienna. Before he quitted this subject, he added that Congress was desired to instruct him to do nothing on the subject of the commissions, without communicating confidentially with Count Vergennes.

I now proceed to Mr. Adams's second [article of] communication, which pointed more directly at the second commission for framing a

¹ Mr. Adams's record of this interview with Mr. Vaughan is printed in the *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. iii. pp. 355-357. — Eds.

² It appears by the *Secret Journals of Congress*, published in 1820, that Mr. Adams was nominated Commissioner, on Sept. 28, 1779, and by a special vote of Congress on Oct. 4th of that year, his commission is dated Sept. 29th.

treaty of commerce with us. It was to operate at the time of the treaty of peace, and as Mr. Adams supposed it might carry him possibly to London . . . he has docketed it, "Commission to his Britannic Majesty." After having shown me the two original commissions, and the original copy of the Congress resolution which recalled him, he then showed me a part of his original instructions, which went only to the extent of two pages and a half of common long writing paper, and related chiefly to the fisheries. The article he pointed out to me was singular. After insisting upon this common right being established to the fisheries his instructions assured him that the different colonies were to remain pledged to each other not to have any trade or commerce with Great Britain if she refused a participation in the fisheries,¹ so that while one part of the instructions made sharing in the fisheries a sort of *sine quâ non* of the treaty of peace, another part made it a [real] *sine quâ non* of the treaty of commerce. There is now to come the application of all this to French politics. Count Vergennes, says Mr. Adams, seeing that all this would tend to procure the concession wished for, and that if procured, a certain motive would be removed for war with the English and for alliance with the French, wrote him a letter to desire that his commission might be kept secret in Europe, and at the same time used every method to get it revoked in America. He succeeded in both attempts, for Mr. Dana, Secretary to his commission, Mr. Thaxter, his private secretary, and Count Vergennes, were the only persons then suffered to be privy to both commissions, and Mr. Adams assures me that at this moment I am the only Englishman who has been made acquainted with them. But he says the times are now changed; and that he gives me leave to make your Lordship apprised of these circumstances, "with his compliments" annexed, and that your Lordship has liberty to communicate them in confidence to particular persons, when it can do public good to England or America; (and at my desire, he further adds) that your Lordship may publicly fortify your argument for conceding the fishery, by declaring to what extent America had gone in her resolutions upon the question. I presume he means that your Lordship should state this matter, however, in general terms. He is moreover ready to furnish your Lordship (on the same terms of confidence) with copies of his two commissions, and though I threw (for obvious reasons²), cold water on the offer, particularly as the commissions had nothing very marked in them, yet he told me that they should hereafter be published in the Remembrancer or elsewhere;

¹ The instructions respecting the proposed treaty of commerce contained a declaration that such a determination had taken place. Compare Secret Journals of Congress, pp. 445, 446, 230, 231, and 225-228, for what regards instructions on the subject of peace and of commerce.

² That is, not to give uneasiness to Mr. Oswald.

and his whole story duly be set forth to posterity, as the recall of the commission left a spot on him which he would do away.

In all these transactions the facts I alluded to in the beginning of my letter are conspicuous.

First of all, France has discovered to America, that the only independence it was meant she should obtain, respected England. Mr. Adams however gives a gloss to this fact by saying, that the country meant to be wounded in all this is England, who has great *present* power; whereas the aggrandizement of America is a more distant concern, and therefore less alarming to France. It was certainly in the fisheries, as being the mutual object of England and America, that France looked for her most fertile scene of discord. She therefore used every possible means for preventing such a concession to America in the fisheries as should content her. And it was upon the same idea in part, that she wanted to shut up the Mississippi. Mr. Adams, however, says that Count Vergennes has completely been overthrown, and yet in a way that leaves him no room for open complaint, a revenge which the more consoles Mr. Adams, as he has been further embroiled with Count Vergennes upon the question whether the French merchants were to be paid off in paper currency or not, for their goods.

It appears as a second fact that it was by premeditation and settled design, that America chose to have for her negotiators such as were determined friends to England. It is not only in the commission to Mr. Adams singly that we are to find this, but in the present joint commission, as Messrs. Jay, Adams, and Laurens were avowed Englishmen, and I think¹ they say Mr. Jefferson likewise; and all who understand Dr. Franklin know that Dr. Franklin is an Englishman upon the broadest principles.

It appears also a decided fact that Mr. Adams is an entire enemy to Count Vergennes; but the fact must not carry us too far, as Mr. Adams, *bonâ fide*, enters into all that Congress and others say about the King of France, personally, and is convinced that America's great card is a wise course to be steered relative to the future wars of England and France. . . . He is a friend to England, and for a double reason; but amidst all his friendships and all his enmities, unless his country offends him, not even the flattery to which he is accessible will seduce him from it. He is not very rich, but money at present would have no lure for him. In short, to give the rest of his character (as it appears to me) he is good natured, rather zealous, of great application, much disposed to caution, resolute, and as able and large minded as a man can well be who knows but one half of mankind, for he is as

¹ Please to observe that the expression here is "I think," "they say"; and that Mr. Jefferson's attachment to France was not then so publicly marked as afterwards.

much ignorant of England, for example, as an Englishman is of America. . . .

I have only one article more to touch upon relative to the public, which relates to the fate of the fisheries. It will not appear from this letter that your Lordship has decided that matter unwisely. Especially after the tacit confession of the Courts of France and Spain on the subject. The cession of them, your Lordship will see, was indispensable for the signature of Mr. Adams, and indeed of Mr. Laurens and the rest. I cannot therefore think it is a dear purchase for future as well as present peace with America, more particularly as I am sure that matters may be so managed as to prevent the participation being very detrimental.

I find Mr. Oswald is going to London. Your Lordship will probably derive great lights from him; but he speaks slowly, and must have his thoughts waited for, and he is apt to be too long upon plain subjects. He is in many respects truly wise, but his goodness and modesty make him too deferent to opinions which he thinks better than his own. Your Lordship must therefore force him to tell his natural opinion.

He will bring a packet I have long had the honor to promise your Lordship.

I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's ever faithful and ever respectful servant.

BENJ^N VAUGHAN.

Respecting the occasion which produced the letter below, dated January 18th, 1783.

B. V. had private intelligence that there was a crisis in the French and Spanish, or Dutch part of the negotiation for peace in 1782-3, and that Count Vergennes took the more moderate side, and that Dr. Franklin's presence might be useful on account of his good sense and weight, in case arguments should be wanted. He therefore wrote a letter to Dr. Franklin, desiring him to be pleased to visit Count Vergennes on the 19th January, 1783 (which letter is printed in the Dr.'s private correspondence, page 423), and afterwards he resolved to see Dr. Franklin on the subject, which he did. In the event Dr. Franklin promised to go; but happily in the mean time, matters adjusted themselves, and on the 20th, preliminaries were signed. Count Vergennes in expectation of this, on the 19th, summoned the American ministers to be present, to countersign orders for the suspension of hostilities, which orders were prepared in French and English, and signed accordingly, with the date of Jan^y 20th, 1783. The following letter gives an account of the visit to Dr. Franklin on the above occasion.

TO THE EARL OF SHELburne.¹

PARIS, Jan^y 18th, 1783.

MY LORD, — My last accounts from England, the fall of the stocks, the apprehensions of this Court, and the departure of Mr. Oswald [for

¹ The letter here in question exists neither in the letter book, nor is it in file, but the copy here given is from a rough copy now put in file, being on the same sort of paper used for my letters of January 5th, and 25th, 1783, and written with the same sort of ink in my own hand. — B. V. Oct^r 10th, 1828.

London] have all combined to persuade me that the peace may be in danger. Without orders or guide therefore, and avowing myself so, I went on to ask Dr. Franklin to step in. He has accordingly promised to go to Versailles to-morrow. My situation did not enable me to say much to him, especially as being an individual without power or instructions. But the continuance of the war for objects not interesting to America, and the possible pleasure he might do even to M. de Vergennes, in adding his voice in favor of peace, with the necessity of the peace being moderate if it was to be lasting, were sufficient topics for me to use.

The Dr. told me that when he had talked with M. de Vergennes, he seemed himself to be disposed to peace, but to be at the same time inclined to suppose England on her part to be only trifling. He added that he had from the first impressed M. de Vergennes with a favorable opinion of your Lordship, and that in consequence of this, M. de Vergennes sent over M. de Raynneval [to London], that after he had thus laid the foundation, M. de Raynneval's accounts continued to keep up that favorable impression, but that present accounts and appearances seemed to have abated it, and they thought the negotiation not sincere.

I suspect the business of America, as it was treated in Parliament, was partly the cause of this change of sentiment; but on this head I did not choose to justify your Lordship for obvious reasons. The condition and circumstances of England would have been rather safer to have touched upon, but I omitted that topic also. I only said in reply that your Lordship had descended into particulars and gone into cessions sufficient to get blame enough at home, and as much blame as if you were sincere, and this alone was proof enough that you were sincere. . . . Dr. Franklin appeared to accept the reasoning.

He wanted much, however, to know what we were doing with the Dutch, but I said very truly that I was greatly ignorant on that subject. I told him that the proposition he had heard about Trincomalee was, I supposed, to be considered as relating to the blended interests of Holland and France, and not wholly to Holland. I said this, because I knew that they did not much like the idea of Holland being plundered when the cause of war was unjust.

I told him that your Lordship could not make a peace relative to the ideas and prejudices of England, if your Lordship was too closely pressed, and that France had always professed a moderation which it belonged to her now to manifest, and that as far as I had learned of circumstances your Lordship could not, as a minister who consulted the continuance of the peace or your own personal safety, go one step farther than you had proposed to do, and that it was very possible that some might think that you had gone too far already. I then revived (what I had before introduced) the topic of humanity, and the duty he owed to America to procure a peace, and said that if there was any balance wanting, as I believed

there was, in the French councils, he himself might perhaps give it; and that now was the proper moment, if there ever was one, to try for it, because from obvious circumstances, the moment had the air of being critical, in every sense of the word, and when peace was deferred, fresh negotiations must probably occasion fresh delays. His interference, I said, would gain him great credit at all events, but I told him that a day was not to be lost.

He said it would be impudent to throw out that we designed to patch up a peace now, and revive the war, for that might induce them, now that they were together, to stick the faster to each other. I said that individuals might use that language in Parliament, but I had never heard it from people in authority. What I had heard from people in authority, was, on the contrary, expressive of an earnest wish for constant peace, and that at moments, I thought there was even a belief that the thing would happen. But I said that this could not happen with a *bad* peace, and that it was to prevent such a disaster that we were asking for a better peace, and that it was for this end alone the war would be continued, if it was continued.

I then requested the Dr. to feel personally for your Lordship, and your situation respecting the known sentiments and sensations of England, and consequently the difficulty that would attend you upon making a peace that was bad. He then said that ministers were indeed in a hard case, because they acted for an ignorant or misinformed public, and the great reason of all which seemed to be that the nation's strength was misrepresented to them. War, he said, was made according to the mistaken imaginations of the people, and peace, according to their real necessities as seen by the peace makers; and hence the frequent idea that they were bribed. He added that England was ruined by her great places, and though it was not a thing likely perhaps to be reformed, yet no reform was more necessary than what respected places. He said that the king's being obliged to provide for a party prevented great persons from agreeing, and that it seemed to him as if the love of quarrelling was so great on account of those places, that there were those who wished the minister just now to make a bad peace, in order to abuse him for it when it was concluded.

This was the substance of what passed between us. If I have done wrong, I throw myself upon your Lordship's mercy, but I was induced to act, because I thought the Dr. *might* take a part, and if he did not take a part, no harm could follow. The crisis of the moment therefore, (and my total abstinence from insinuations that he ought to help *us* from our having complied with the wishes of America or the like) will, I hope plead my excuse, and be my warrant for having, so far at least, acted with some discretion.

My conversations with Dr. Franklin, however, continue to assure me

that he has greatly respected and esteemed your Lordship, and that nothing that other people will say will change his opinion.

For my own judgment about peace or war, it is not worth having, and yet I cannot help assuring your Lordship that I think a good peace will be principally owing to your Lordship's intrepidity, and war to the absolute necessity of affairs, for it seems to me that your Lordship has succeeded as far as England will give consent.

I find that Dr. Franklin is anxious about West Florida; but I asked, even should it be given up, whether this event would not be more fortunate than keeping the war open only on that account, and whether there was not still a means and moment after the peace, left for talking about it. I said this, knowing how much the Commissioners connected this question with the navigation of the Mississippi, and with the idea of England's meaning a sincere reconciliation with America.

I told the Dr. lastly that he was to regard me as an authority for nothing, except the crisis of the moment, and the necessity of his instant interference.

I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's ever faithful and respectful servant.

BENJⁿ VAUGHAN.

Remarks were also made during the meeting by Rev. Dr. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, and by Messrs. EDWARD CHANNING, FRANKLIN B. SANBORN, CHARLES P. BOWDITCH, and GRENVILLE H. NORCROSS, the last of whom gave to the Cabinet an interesting relic of the occupation of the Brattle Square Church by the British troops in 1775. ;

A new volume of the Proceedings — vol. xvi. of the second series, covering the record of the meetings from March to December, 1902, both inclusive — was ready for delivery at this meeting.